

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, December 6, 1999
Volume 35—Number 48
Pages 2453–2515

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Editor’s Note: The Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents is also available on the Internet on the *GPO Access* service at <http://www.gpo.gov/nara/nara003.html>.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under

regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for \$80.00 per year (\$137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for \$93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is \$3.00 (\$3.75 for foreign mailing).

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Week Ending Friday, December 3, 1999

The President's Radio Address

November 27, 1999

Good morning. On this holiday weekend, when we count our many blessings, Americans are also busy buying gifts for the next holidays, right around the corner. Today I'd like to speak with you about the remarkable rise of the Internet as a destination for holiday shopping and about how we can ensure that on-line commerce will live up to its enormous promise.

On Thanksgiving, beyond our family's personal blessings, my family and I gave thanks for the enormous prosperity America is carrying forward into the 21st century. One of the key reasons our economy continues to thrive, with the longest peacetime expansion in history, is that we're making the most of new technologies. Especially, the Internet and other information technologies are revolutionizing our economy, powering one-third of our economic growth.

As the Vice President will make clear in a report he'll soon release, few applications of information technology have more potential than electronic commerce. During the holiday season alone, on-line shopping could exceed \$9 billion, doubling or even tripling the on-line totals for the same period last year.

About 4 million American families will buy some of their gifts on-line for the first time this holiday season. I intend to join them, because on-line shopping has significant benefits—not just for consumers and large established retailers. On-line commerce also opens a world of opportunity for local artisans and small entrepreneurs.

As with shopping in stores, when consumers shop on the Internet, they must take basic precautions to ensure that what they see is what they get. To help familiarize on-line consumers with these precautions, the Federal Trade Commission has prepared a

useful check list. You can find the complete checklist at www.consumer.gov.

But today I'd like to emphasize at least some of the essentials. First, in the on-line world, you must pay close attention to details. Carefully check for shipping and delivery dates, for extra fees, warranties, return policies, and phone numbers to call if you run into a problem. Second, always buy with a credit card. With credit cards you are protected by Federal law against unauthorized charges. Third, guard your privacy at all times. Look for the unbroken key or padlock symbols on the order page to ensure that your credit card information will be transmitted securely. Don't share passwords with anyone and be sure to read the merchant's privacy policy to see what information is being collected about you and how it will be used.

I'm pleased to announce that, thanks to the leadership of Vice President Gore, many leading companies and organizations, including the Better Business Bureau's OnLine, American Express, MasterCard, Dell, Get Netwise, eBay, America OnLine, and Amazon.com—all are joining with us to protect and educate consumers this holiday season. Many are distributing guides to help people shop on-line safely and wisely. Some are offering financial guarantees that go above and beyond Federal law. If we want Internet commerce to continue to grow, we all must work together to make sure that shopping on-line is just as safe as shopping in a mall.

I'd like to close today by asking all of you to think not only about using the Internet to buy gifts for friends and family but also to give more lasting gifts to our community and our future. As I discovered during the philanthropy conference we held at the White House last month, charitable websites, like Helping.org, have made signing up to contribute time or money in your community as easy as checking on the weather. So this

holiday season, let's use every avenue possible, including the Internet, to give something back to our communities.

Enjoy the rest of your Thanksgiving weekend, and thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:17 p.m. on November 26 at Camp David, MD, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 27. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 26 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on Ulster Unionist Council Action in the Northern Ireland Peace Process

November 27, 1999

I welcome this historic step toward lasting peace in Northern Ireland and congratulate David Trimble on his leadership in bringing about a successful vote in the Ulster Unionist Council. The Ulster Unionist decision today, which follows critical decisions by all the pro-Agreement parties over the past several weeks, is an important move forward to full implementation of the Good Friday accord in all its aspects. Beginning next week, government in Northern Ireland is being put back directly in the hands of all the people. I welcome this progress and urge all parties to continue working together on building the foundations for lasting peace. I pledge the support of the United States to all those who are helping to make possible a brighter future for Northern Ireland.

Remarks on Signing Consolidated Appropriations Legislation for Fiscal Year 2000

November 29, 1999

Thank you. Good afternoon. Please be seated. I want to welcome the Members of Congress who are here, members of the Cabinet, the police officers and teachers who are shielding me from the cold wind—[laughter]—and who represent the big winners in this year's budget. I would like to say a special word of thanks to Jack Lew, Sylvia Mathews, Larry Stein, and Martha Foley for the work that they did on this budget. And I

know that many Members of the Senate and the House who are here brought their staff members who worked on the budget—I want to thank them for their work, as well.

Last January, in my State of the Union Address, I asked our Congress to use this truly historic time of peace and prosperity to meet our generation's responsibilities to the new century—to extend our economic prosperity, improve our education system, make our streets safer, protect our environment, move more Americans from welfare to work, prepare for the aging of our Nation, and strengthen our leadership in the world. The first budget of the 21st century was a long time in coming, but it goes a very long way toward fulfilling those historic responsibilities.

Though it leaves some challenges unmet, it represents real progress. It is a budget for a Government that lives within its means and lives up to the values of the American people. We value prosperity, and this budget will help to extend it. It maintains the fiscal discipline that has turned deficits into surpluses and gives us what will be in February the longest economic expansion in the history of the United States.

It avoids risky tax cuts that would have spent hundreds of billions of dollars from the Social Security surplus and drained our ability to advance education and other important public purposes.

The budget keeps us on track toward paying down the debt so that in 15 years, our Nation will be debt-free for the first time since 1835. This will mean lower interest rates and greater growth for a whole generation of Americans.

We value education, and this budget truly puts education first, continuing our commitment to hire 100,000 highly-qualified teachers to lower class size in the early grades—which common sense and research both tells us leads to improved learning.

The budget also helps to fulfill another promise I made last winter, to encourage more accountability for results in our Nation's schools. Under this budget, for the first time we will help States and school districts turn around or shut down their worst-performing schools—schools that year after year fail to give our most disadvantaged students

the learning they need to escape poverty and reach their full potential. And the budget provides further help for students to reach higher standards by doubling funds for after-school and summer school programs, which will enable us to reach hundreds of thousands of more students, and by increasing support for mentoring programs, including the GEAR UP program to help students go on to college.

We value the safety of our families, and this budget will make America a safer place. It invests in our COPS program, which already has funded 100,000 community police officers and helped to give us the lowest crime rate in 25 years. This agreement will help to hire up to 50,000 more community police officers, targeted in neighborhoods where the crime rates still are too high.

We value the environment, and this budget protects the environment and preserves our precious natural heritage. It includes our historic lands legacy initiative to set aside more of our magnificent natural areas and vital green spaces, and does not include destructive, anti-environmental riders.

We value quality health care, and this budget includes historic investments in biomedical research, mental health, pediatric training, and other areas. And it ensures that hospitals and other medical providers will have the resources they need to provide the 39 million elderly and disabled Medicare beneficiaries with the quality health care they need and deserve.

Finally, we value America's role of leadership in the world, and this budget strengthens that role, with greater investments in our Nation's strong defense and our Nation's diplomacy, by paying our dues and arrears to the United Nations, meeting our commitments to the Middle East peace process, providing debt relief for the poorest countries of the world, and funding efforts to safeguard nuclear weapons and expertise in Russia.

Let me thank the leaders of both parties for their roles in this agreement. We had a lot of late night, long phone calls which led to it. I thank the leaders of the relevant committees and subcommittees for their special efforts in this regard. And, of course, I want to say a special word of thanks to the leaders and members of my party in both houses who

strongly supported my efforts for the 100,000 teachers, the 50,000 police, the investments in the environment, and paying the U.N. dues.

As we celebrate what we have accomplished, I ask us all to be humble and mindful of what we still have to accomplish. To give all Americans in all health plans the protections they need, we still need a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights. To curb gun violence and keep firearms out of the hands of criminals and children, we still need sensible gun safety legislation—to close the gun show loophole in the Brady law; to ban the importation of large ammunition clips; to include the requirement for child trigger locks in a juvenile Brady bill. To build one America with freedom and justice for all, we should pass the "Hate Crimes Prevention Act." To meet the challenge of the aging of America, we must extend the life of the Social Security Trust Fund well beyond the years of the baby boomers' retirement, lift the earnings limitations, and alleviate poverty among older women on Social Security. To ensure the health of our seniors in the years to come, we must secure and modernize Medicare, including a voluntary prescription drug benefit. To make sure hard-working Americans have a place at the table of our prosperity, we must pass a new markets initiative to give Americans the same incentives to invest in poor areas they have to invest in poor areas around the world. We must raise the minimum wage and increase our support for quality child care.

In the weeks and months ahead, we can achieve these vital goals if we keep in mind that the disagreements we have are far less important than our shared values and our shared responsibility to the future. With this budget, we have helped to begin that future.

Again, let me thank the leaders and the Members in Congress in both parties that contributed to a budget that passed with large majorities in both Houses and both parties. I am proud to sign a bill that I believe will give us a stronger, better America in the 21st century.

I'd like to now invite the Members of Congress to come up and stand with me, and then I'd like to ask the police officers and

the teachers to come in behind the Members of Congress, and we'll sign the budget.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:25 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. H.R. 3194, approved November 29, was assigned Public Law No. 106-113.

Proclamation 7256—World AIDS Day, 1999

November 29, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As this year draws to a close, the world looks with hope to a new century and a new millennium. But in that new century, we will still face a familiar and deadly enemy: HIV and AIDS. Already, more than 33 million people around the world have been infected with HIV; by the year 2005, that figure will likely soar to more than 100 million.

The theme of World AIDS Day this year is "AIDS—End the Silence. Listen, Learn, Live!" This simple message challenges us all to become better informed about this global pandemic and to serve as strong and vocal advocates for HIV/AIDS education, prevention, and care. When we fail to tell our children the truth about how HIV is transmitted, we put them at risk for infection. When we are silent about the need for compassionate care for the ill and dying, we allow too many of those infected with AIDS to spend their final days unloved and alone.

Throughout my Presidency, I have strived to break the silence surrounding HIV/AIDS, and my Administration has worked hard to eradicate this devastating global threat. We can take heart that many people with HIV/AIDS today are living longer and more fulfilling lives and that new drugs are showing promising results in halting the progression of the disease. However, AIDS has exposed the tremendous gulf that exists between those who share in the prosperity of our global economy and those who do not. Of the millions of people around the world coping with HIV and AIDS, most are living in poverty, without access to new treatments or even the

basic care that could increase the quality and length of their lives.

Nowhere is the impact of this disease more devastating than in Africa, where 13 million men, women, and children have already died of AIDS, and 11,000 more are becoming infected each day. In response to this health catastrophe, this year my Administration sought and attained the largest-ever U.S. budget commitment to the global fight against AIDS. This increase of \$100 million will more than double our support for AIDS awareness and prevention, home and community-based care, care of children orphaned by AIDS, and development of the infrastructure necessary to support these efforts. I invite other G-8 nations to join us, and I urge other foreign governments, corporate leaders, nongovernmental organizations, faith communities, foundations, AIDS organizations, and citizens around the globe to make their own contributions to the crusade against HIV/AIDS.

To fight HIV/AIDS on the home front, this year's budget includes a \$73 million increase in funding for HIV prevention activities; an increase of \$183 million in the Ryan White CARE Act, which helps provide primary care and support for those living with HIV/AIDS; an additional \$80 million in funding to the Minority AIDS Initiative, which uses existing programs to reach African Americans, Latinos, and other racial and ethnic minorities disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS; and an estimated \$300 million in additional funds for AIDS-related research at the National Institutes of Health. I have given high priority to the development of a vaccine for AIDS, and our scientists and researchers remain committed to developing a vaccine that works for all who need it.

Until they achieve that goal, we must work together to break the silence and increase dialogue; to fight the stigmatization and protect the rights of those living with HIV and AIDS; and to help those infected find the care and treatment they need. As we usher in a new century, we must pledge to stay the course in our crusade until the world is finally freed from the shadow of this devastating epidemic.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,
President of the United States of America,

by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim December 1, 1999, as World AIDS Day. I invite the Governors of the States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, officials of the other territories subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and the American people to join me in reaffirming our commitment to defeating HIV and AIDS. I encourage every American to participate in appropriate commemorative programs and ceremonies in workplaces, houses of worship, and other community centers, to reach out to protect and educate our children, and to help and comfort all people who are living with HIV and AIDS.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., December 1, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on December 2.

Memorandum on Facilitating the Growth of Electronic Commerce

November 29, 1999

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Facilitating the Growth of Electronic Commerce

The rapid growth of the Internet and its increasing use throughout the world for electronic commerce holds great promise for American consumers and for the Nation. Consumers will have significantly greater choice and convenience and will benefit from enhanced competition for their businesses.

It is essential for consumers and the health of the economy that government facilitate not only retail activity, which has increased substantially, but also the movement to the online environment of other categories of transactions. We must update laws and regu-

lations developed before the advent of the Internet that may have the unintended effect of impeding business-to-business and business-to-consumer online transactions. Impediments may include regulatory or licensing requirements and technical standards and other policies that may hinder electronic commerce in particular goods or services. While some of these legal restrictions are the subject of pending legislation, other potential barriers are outside the scope of those legislative proposals.

Under the Government Paperwork Elimination Act, Federal agencies are addressing issues regarding electronic transactions within the Federal Government and between the Federal Government and other parties. We should provide for similar consideration of laws and regulations governing electronic commerce in the private sectors.

In adapting laws and regulations to the electronic environment, it is critical that consumers and the public at large be assured of a level of protection in electronic commerce equivalent to that which they now enjoy in more traditional forms of commerce. Any disparity in protection may undermine consumer confidence in electronic commerce and impede the growth of this important new trade medium. At the same time, we must recognize that different media may require different approaches and that public interest protections designed for the physical world may not fit in the electronic commerce arena. We should attempt to develop an equivalent level of protection, recognizing that different means may be necessary to accomplish that goal.

The United States Government Working Group on Electronic Commerce (the Working Group) shall establish a subgroup, led by the Department of Commerce, to: (1) identify Federal, State, and local laws and regulations that impose barriers to the growth of electronic commerce, and (2) recommend how these laws and regulations should be revised to facilitate the development of electronic commerce, while ensuring that protection of the public interest (including consumer protection) is equivalent to that provided with respect to offline commerce. This subgroup shall carry out the responsibilities identified below on behalf of the Working

Group, with the exception of reporting to the President.

Within 60 days of the date of this memorandum, the Working Group shall invite the public to identify laws or regulations that may obstruct or hinder electronic commerce, including those laws and regulations that should be modified on a priority basis because they are currently inhibiting electronic commerce that is otherwise ready to take place. The Working Group also shall invite the public to recommend how governments should adapt public interest regulations to the electronic environment. These recommendations should discuss ways to ensure that public interest protections for online transactions will be equivalent to that now provided for offline transactions; maintain technology neutrality; minimize legal and regulatory barriers to electronic commerce; and take into account cross-border transactions that are now likely to occur electronically.

The Working Group shall request each Federal agency, including independent regulatory agencies, to identify any provision of law administered by such agency, or any regulation issued by such agency, that may impose a barrier to electronic transactions or otherwise impede the conduct of commerce online or by electronic means, and to recommend how such laws or regulations may be revised to allow electronic commerce to proceed while maintaining protection of the public interest.

The Working Group shall invite representatives of State and local governments to identify laws and regulations at the State and local level that may impose a barrier to electronic transactions or otherwise to the conduct of commerce online or by electronic means, to discuss how State and local governments are revising such laws or regulations to facilitate electronic commerce while protecting the public interest, and to discuss the potential for consistent approaches to these issues.

The Working Group shall report to the President in a timely manner identifying:

- (1) laws and regulations that impose barriers to electronic commerce or that need to be amended to facilitate electronic commerce, and
- (2) recommended steps for addressing the barriers that will facilitate the growth of electronic commerce and will ensure continued protection for consumers and the public at large.

William J. Clinton

Statement on Signing Consolidated Appropriations Legislation for Fiscal Year 2000

November 29, 1999

I have signed into law H.R. 3194, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2000. I am pleased that my Administration and the Congress were able to reach agreement on the first budget of the 21st Century—producing a hard-won victory for the American people.

This legislation makes progress on several important fronts. It puts education first, honoring our commitment to hire 100,000 qualified teachers to lower class size in the early grades and doubling the funds for after school and summer school programs.

It makes America a safer place. The bill provides an acceptable funding level for my 21st Century Policing Initiative, which builds on the success of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program. To date, the COPS program has funded more than 100,000 additional police officers for our streets. This bill funds the first increment of the 21st Century Policing initiative, which will place an additional 30,000 to 50,000 police officers on the street over the next 5 years, while expanding the concept of community policing to include community prosecution and law enforcement technology assistance. I appreciate the Congress' efforts to forge a bipartisan commitment to the program, which will build upon our successful efforts to reduce crime in our communities.

The bill strengthens our effort to preserve natural areas and protect our environment by its support of my Lands Legacy Initiative. I am very pleased that the bill does not include most of the environmental riders that would have put special interests above the national interest.

This budget agreement also strengthens America's leadership role in the world by

paying our dues and arrears to the U.N.; by meeting our commitments to the Middle East peace process; by making critical investments in debt relief for the poorest countries, by enhancing the security of our overseas personnel; by providing for new, critical peacekeeping missions; and by funding efforts to safeguard nuclear weapons in Russia.

Labor/Health and Human Services/ Education Bill

Specifically, I am pleased that the legislation provides \$1.3 billion for the second installment of my plan to help reduce class size in the early grades. The Republican proposal did not guarantee funding for the teachers hired last year and would have instead allowed Class Size dollars to be used for virtually any activity, including vouchers. The final budget agreement supports the over 29,000 teachers hired last year plus an additional 2,500 teachers.

The bill appropriately includes several other high priority education initiatives. One million students will continue to be served by the Reading Excellence Initiative and 375,000 more students than last year will have access to 21st Century Community Learning Centers. By providing \$145 million for Public Charter Schools, approximately 650 more schools than last year will receive startup funding.

I commend the Congress for providing increases to several programs in my Hispanic Education Agenda that address the disproportionately low educational achievement and high dropout rates of Latino and limited English proficient students. The Hispanic Education Agenda includes programs such as Title I Grants to Local Education Agencies (LEAs), Adult Education, Bilingual Education, the High School Equivalency and College Assistance Migrant Programs (HEP/CAMP), Hispanic-serving Institutions, and support services to promote the graduation of low-income college students (TRIO).

I am disappointed, however, that this legislation does not provide any of the funding that I specifically requested for Troops to Teachers. This lack of funding jeopardizes this program, which would have provided 3,000 new teachers in high-need subject areas and school districts.

I am pleased that the bill funds most of my major proposals for job training, worker protection programs, and grants for working with developing countries to establish core labor standards. For example, \$1.6 billion is included for dislocated worker assistance, enabling the program to provide training and re-employment services to 858,500 dislocated workers. Since 1993, my Administration has succeeded in tripling funding for, and participation in, programs that help dislocated workers return to work.

As authorized in the bipartisan Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the Congress has provided \$140 million to expand services to job seekers at One-Stop centers.

I am pleased that the bill provides the funds I requested for major youth job training programs. Specifically, the bill includes the \$250 million I requested for Youth Opportunity Grants to finance the second year of the 5-year competitive grants that provide education, training, and support services to 58,000 youth in Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. In addition, the bill provides the \$1 billion for Youth Activities Formula Grants to provide training and summer employment opportunities to an estimated 577,700 youth. Also it includes \$55 million for the final year of Federal funding for the School-to-Work initiative. The bill provides \$1.4 billion for the Job Corps program, including financing for enhanced follow-up services for graduates, completion of a four-center expansion initiated in FY 1998, and construction of Head Start child care facilities on five Job Corps campuses.

The bill provides \$83 million, or 8 percent above the FY 1999 enacted level, for labor law enforcement agencies, funding key initiatives to ensure workplace safety, address domestic child labor abuses, encourage equal pay, assist in complying with pension law, and promote family leave.

I am especially pleased that this legislation includes critically needed changes to the Welfare-to-Work program's eligibility requirements. We have worked closely with the Congress to ensure these changes were enacted this year. By simplifying eligibility, this legislation will allow the Welfare-to-Work program, within existing resources, to serve more effectively long-term welfare recipients

and noncustodial parents of low-income children. The bill also establishes an alternative penalty that is tough, but fair, for States that have not implemented certain child support enforcement requirements.

This legislation fully funds my request for Head Start, adding up to 44,000 new slots for low-income children and continuing on the path to serve one million children by FY 2002.

Unfortunately, the bill reduces the Social Services Block Grant by \$134 million below the FY 1999 level, undermining programs serving our most vulnerable families.

The bill includes historic investments in biomedical research, mental health, pediatric training, and a number of other critically important public health initiatives. It also makes an essential downpayment on my Safety Net proposal, which is designed to provide financial and technical support to those providing a disproportionate amount of care to the uninsured. Lastly, it provides payment restorations to hospitals, nursing homes, and other providers serving the 39 million elderly and disabled beneficiaries.

It also provides a \$34.5 billion investment in health programs, 11.7 percent above the FY 1999 enacted level, including an historic increase of \$2.3 billion for the National Institutes of Health. These new initiatives will strengthen the public health infrastructure, provide critical prevention and treatment services to individuals with mental illness, and invest in pediatric training programs. Specifically, the bill provides \$40 million to support graduate medical education at free-standing children's hospitals, which play an essential role in the education of the Nation's pediatricians; \$67 million above the FY 1999 funding level for the Mental Health Block Grant, a 23 percent increase over FY 1999 and the largest increase ever; \$30 million for health education, prevention, and treatment services to address health disparities among minority populations; and an additional \$62 million over FY 1999 funding levels to provide critical immunizations to children nationwide. The \$239 million for the Title X Family Planning program will enable family planning clinics to extend comprehensive reproductive health care services to an additional 500,000 clients who are neither Med-

icaid-eligible nor insured. In addition, the \$25 million for the Health Care for the Uninsured Initiative will support the development of integrated systems of care and address service gaps within these systems.

It provides \$25 million, a full down payment on our proposed \$1 billion investment to develop integrated systems of care for the uninsured. It also dedicates an additional \$15 million to identify the best ways to deliver health care coverage to this population. I am pleased that the bill includes a \$73 million increase in funding for HIV prevention activities to help stop the spread of this disease; an increase of \$183 million in the Ryan White CARE Act, which helps provide primary care and support for those living with HIV/AIDS; and an estimated \$300 million in additional funds for AIDS-related research at the NIH. The bill also includes \$80 million in funding to the Minority AIDS Initiative, which utilizes existing programs to reach African-Americans, Latinos, and other racial and ethnic minorities that are disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS, as well as an additional \$100 million to fight AIDS internationally. Finally, the Administration helped protect local authority over HIV prevention activities, successfully removing language from the District of Columbia appropriations bill that would have tied the hands of community health agencies in their ability to use needle exchange programs as part of their overall HIV prevention strategy.

The bill includes \$264 million to expand HHS' bioterrorism initiative. It provides \$52 million for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) national pharmaceutical stock pile and \$123 million for CDC to expand national, State, and local epidemiologic, laboratory, and surveillance planning capacity, as well as to conduct a vaccine study. The bill also fully funds my request to expand the number of Metropolitan Medical Response Systems that can respond to the health and medical consequences of a chemical, biological, or nuclear incident, and to enhance smallpox and anthrax vaccine research and development. I am particularly pleased that the bill funds the creation of a new national electronic disease surveillance system, which will also help detect outbreaks

and strengthen the public health delivery system.

I commend the Congress for providing funding for my Nursing Home Initiative, including resources for more rigorous inspections of nursing facilities and improved Federal oversight of nursing home quality, and for funding the 31-percent increase in Home-Delivered Meals that I requested.

Finally, the bill also includes the Balanced Budget Refinement Act of 1999, which invests \$16 billion over 5 years to address the flawed policy and excessive payment reductions resulting from the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. It lifts caps on therapy services, increases payments for very sick nursing home patients, restores teaching hospital funding, and eases the transition to the new prospective payment system for hospital outpatients. It also includes provisions to limit cost-sharing requirements for Medicare beneficiaries and extends coverage of important immunosuppressive drugs. Unfortunately, it includes provisions that are not justifiable, such as a \$4 billion payment increase to managed care plans that are already overpaid according to most experts. This is troubling because any excess payments from the Medicare trust fund put the program at greater risk.

Commerce/Justice/State Bill

Regrettably, the bill does not contain a needed hate crimes provision that was included in the Senate version of the bill. I urge the Congress to pass legislation in a timely manner that would strengthen the Federal Government's ability to combat hate crimes by relaxing jurisdictional obstacles and by giving Federal prosecutors the ability to prosecute hate crimes that are based on sexual orientation, gender, or disability, along with those based on race, color, religion, and national origin.

I am pleased that we were able to secure additional funds for the Legal Services Corporation. Adequate funding for legal services is essential to ensuring that all citizens have access to the Nation's justice system. Similarly, through negotiations with the Congress, the funding level for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was increased above the FY 1999 enacted level. The additional funds will assist the EEOC

in its continued progress in reducing the backlog of employment discrimination cases.

The bill funds my requested \$13 million increase for the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division. These funds will support law enforcement actions related to hate crimes, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and fair housing and lending.

The legislation contains adequate funding for the decennial census, and includes a compromise on language requiring the Census Bureau to allocate funds among eight functions or frameworks. With the decennial census approaching, I am confident that this language will not inhibit the Census Bureau's ability to actually conduct the census.

The United States has recently entered into the U.S.-Canada Pacific Salmon Agreement. The Agreement ends years of contention between the U.S. and Canada regarding expired fishing harvest restrictions and provides for improved fisheries management. I am pleased that legislative riders that would have hindered implementation of this important Agreement have been modified or removed from the bill. In addition, additional funds have been provided for implementation of the Agreement and for other salmon recovery efforts. These funds will allow us to work cooperatively with our partners—Canada, a number of western States, and Treaty Tribes—to implement the Agreement and to restore Pacific coastal salmon runs.

The bill does not provide additional requested funding to the Department of Justice for tobacco litigation, but does not preclude the expenditure of funds for this purpose. We will identify existing resources to pursue this important case. Smoking-related health expenses cost taxpayers billions of dollars each year through Medicare, veterans' and military health, and other Federal health programs. The \$20 million I requested is needed to represent the interests of the taxpayers, who should not have to bear the responsibility for these staggering costs.

Critical funds were added to help our Nation's 24 million small businesses. The bill now includes \$16.5 million for my New Markets Initiative to invest in targeted rural and urban areas. Also, funding levels were increased for the Small Business Administration's (SBA) operating expenses and disaster

loan program. These funds will enable the SBA to provide critical services, including a fast and effective response to Hurricane Floyd.

I regret that a provision is included that would amend the recently enacted Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2000, that could limit the access of Federal government employees to contraceptive coverage.

Foreign Operations Bill and Other International Affairs Appropriations and Authorizations

I am pleased that we were able to reach bipartisan agreement with the Congress on a level of funding for international affairs programs that supports our continued engagement on key global issues. Most notably, we were able to agree to meet our obligations to the United Nations, which will allow us to keep our vote in the General Assembly. We also obtained additional funding for international peacekeeping efforts seeking to redress the instability and suffering caused by conflicts in East Timor, Kosovo, and Africa.

The bill includes my full request for the Wye River Agreement, which will support our partners in the Middle East as they accelerate their historic attempt to secure a permanent peace. We gained bilateral funding for the new Cologne debt reduction initiative, as well as agreement from the Congress to allow the International Monetary Fund to use existing resources to finance its portion of the initiative, allowing us to begin to lessen the crushing debt burden that many of the world's poorest nations face as they try to implement difficult economic and democratic reforms.

Unfortunately, the bill also includes a provision on international family planning that I have strongly opposed throughout my Administration. This is a one-time provision that imposes additional restrictions on international family planning groups. However, I insisted that the Congress allow for a Presidential waiver provision, which I have exercised today.

I have instructed USAID to implement the new restrictions on family planning money in such a way as to minimize to the extent

possible the impact on international family planning efforts and to respect the rights of citizens to speak freely on issues of importance in their countries, such as the rights of women to make their own reproductive decisions. As I have stated before, I do not believe it is appropriate to limit foreign NGOs' use of their own money, or their ability to participate in the democratic process in their own countries. Thus, I will oppose inclusion of this restriction in any future appropriations bill.

The bill takes a step in the right direction in terms of paying our dues and our debts to the United Nations and other international organizations. The bill includes most of the funds requested for U.N. arrears, as well as the United Nations Reform Act, which authorizes payment of these arrears contingent upon certain U.N. reforms. My Administration is committed to making sure that all of our debts are paid, and, while doing so, pressing for reforms that will make the U.N. more efficient and effective.

International peacekeeping activities in this bill are funded at a level of \$500 million, \$300 million above the level in the bill that I vetoed. This additional funding is crucial and will support the United States' response to emergent peacekeeping requirements in Kosovo, Asia, and Africa. In each of these places, the United States has worked with allies and friends to end conflicts that have claimed countless innocent lives and thrown whole regions into turmoil. This funding will help America do its part to make and keep the peace in troubled regions.

On a number of other critical foreign policy priorities, we were able to achieve bipartisan agreements that will directly affect the lives of Americans and others alike. We fully funded a new initiative that will significantly expand our efforts to stem the spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world. We significantly increased funding for programs aimed at reducing the threat of weapons of mass destruction in the former Soviet Union and elsewhere. We agreed to a significant package of assistance to Kosovo and Southeastern Europe that will help to solidify the fragile peace that we and our NATO allies have secured. We initiated

new programs that will help to provide alternatives to the child labor practices that are still too prevalent in much of the world. I am particularly pleased the bill provides my full request for embassy security to protect the men and women who serve our country abroad.

There are still important commitments and goals that were not adequately addressed in this bill. I am disappointed that we did not achieve all of the funding that we need to fully implement the multilateral portion of the Cologne debt initiative, and that we were not able to meet our commitments to provide multilateral environmental assistance through the Global Environment Facility. However, in total, this bill demonstrates that the bipartisan consensus that America must remain engaged in global affairs, which has guided our interaction with the rest of the world since the end of the Second World War, is still very much alive and well, and I am hopeful that it will continue to guide our foreign policy into the 21st Century.

I continue to believe that various provisions prohibiting implementation of the Kyoto Protocol in this bill are unnecessary, as my Administration has no intent of implementing the Protocol prior to ratification. Furthermore, I will consider activities that meet our responsibilities under the ratified U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change to be consistent with this provision. Finally, to the extent these provisions could be read to prevent the United States from negotiating with foreign governments about climate change, it would be inconsistent with my constitutional authority. Accordingly, I will construe this provision as not detracting from my authority to engage in the many activities, both formal and informal, that constitute negotiations relating to climate change.

This legislation includes a number of provisions in the various Acts incorporated in it regarding the conduct of foreign affairs that raise serious constitutional concerns. These provisions would direct or burden my negotiations with foreign governments and international organizations, as well as intrude on my ability to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive diplomatic negotiations. Similarly, some provisions would constrain my

Commander in Chief authority and the exercise of my exclusive authority to receive ambassadors and to conduct diplomacy. Other provisions raise concerns under the Appointments and Recommendation Clauses. My Administration's objections to most of these and other provisions have been made clear in previous statements of Administration policy and other communications to the Congress. Wherever possible, I will construe these provisions to be consistent with my constitutional prerogatives and responsibilities and where such a construction is not possible, I will treat them as not interfering with those prerogatives and responsibilities.

District of Columbia Bill

With respect to the District of Columbia bill, I am pleased that the majority and minority in the Congress were able to come together to pass a version that I can sign. While I continue to object to remaining riders that violate the principles of home rule, some of the highly objectionable provisions that would have intruded upon local citizens' right to make decisions about local matters have been modified from previous versions of the bill. My Administration will continue to strenuously urge the Congress to keep such riders out of the FY 2001 D.C. Appropriations Bill.

I commend the Congress for providing the Federal funds I requested for the District of Columbia. The bill includes essential funding for District Courts and Corrections and the D.C. Offender Supervision Agency and provides requested funds for a new tuition assistance program for District of Columbia residents. The bill also includes funding to promote the adoption of children in the District's foster care system, to support the Children's National Medical Center, to assist the Metropolitan Police Department in eliminating open-air drug trafficking in the District, and for drug testing and treatment, among other programs.

Interior and Related Agencies Bill

With respect to the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies bill, I commend the Congress for agreeing on an acceptable version—one that does not include most of the highly objectionable provisions that

would harm the environment and benefit special interest groups by allowing the inappropriate use of national forests and other public lands and resources.

In particular, we have reached a fair compromise on millsite claims under the 1872 Mining Law. Hardrock mining operations under existing approved plans of operations, as well as applications for new mining plans filed by the date of the Interior Solicitor's Opinion of November 7, 1997, would go forward without the Department of the Interior applying the five-acre-per-mining-claim millsite limitation. The Department of the Interior would impose this limitation on plans for new hardrock mining operations filed after November 7, 1997; it would also impose the limitation on amended plans of operations filed after November 7, 1997, that add millsite acreage.

Our agreement also will allow final rules to take effect in the near future that will provide a fair return to the taxpayers for the development of Federal oil resources; and will ensure more effective environmental protection in hardrock mining on Federal lands.

This bill provides two-thirds of the funds I requested for my Lands Legacy initiative and represents a significant improvement over prior-year funding, allowing us to protect such irreplaceable national treasures as the Baca Ranch in New Mexico, the Everglades in Florida, wilderness lands in the California Desert, and Civil War battlefield sites that are threatened by urban sprawl. There is also adequate support given to the Clean Water Action Plan. I am especially pleased with the additional funding for the Forest Service and for abandoned mine lands reclamation, which would make significant progress in addressing acid mine drainage and watershed problems in the Appalachian region. I look forward to working with the Congress next year to provide full and permanent funding for my Lands Legacy proposal, including full Federal and State funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

My Administration has also been able to secure additional funding for energy conservation, the single largest component of my Climate Change Technology Initiative, which will help us to form the partnerships with

industry that are vital to the development of a new generation of ultra-efficient cars, more efficient and affordable housing, and more efficient, less-polluting industrial processes. This progress will help us to address the threat of global warming economically and practically.

I commend the Congress for the historic \$157.2 million increase for Indian health, which is only slightly below the \$172 million increase the Administration sought for the Indian Health Service. This funding increase represents a continuing demonstration of the Federal commitment to improve the health status of Native Americans and Alaska natives. I also commend the Congress for the removal of an objectionable rider that would have infringed on tribal sovereignty, and for providing specific funding to accommodate new contracts with tribes.

Although I am disappointed that the Congress has failed to increase funding for the National Endowment for the Arts for the eighth straight year, I am pleased with the generally positive debate and the first increase in 4 years in funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The bill also contains language on the American Heritage Rivers initiative. I believe that the congressional language is unnecessary and unfortunate. I will direct the Departments funded by this bill, within existing laws and authorities, to continue to support and undertake community-oriented services or environmental projects on rivers I have recognized as part of the initiative.

By increasing critical funding for land conservation efforts and removing harmful environmental provisions, the legislation represents a step forward in efforts to protect the environment and manage Federal lands and resources responsibly.

Disaster Assistance

I am pleased that the bill includes over \$500 million in additional funds for our Nation's farmers, ranchers, and rural communities to help them recover from natural disasters, particularly this year's hurricanes. These funds will help farmers clear their streams and fields for next year's crop, just as the \$2.5 billion in loans provided in the bill will help them secure the financing they

need for planting. Vitrally needed funds are included to help low-income rural families and farm laborers repair and replace housing damaged by Hurricane Floyd, and low-interest loans will be available to repair and replace farm structures and equipment lost in the storm. In addition, \$186 million is included for additional crop loss payments across the country, including areas in the East that suffered through one of the worst droughts in memory. The bill also provides funding to implement the mandatory livestock price reporting authority included in the Agriculture Appropriations Act, which will make the livestock market more transparent and particularly help small producers get a fair price for their livestock in the market.

Authorization Bills/Other Issues

The bill also includes a provision that would delay the Department of Health and Human Services's Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network Final Rule for a minimum of 42 days from the bill's effective date. This Final Rule is in response to my Administration's belief that the current organ allocation policies by the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network are inequitable because patients with similar severities of illness are treated differently, depending on where they may live or at which transplant center they may be listed.

The Satellite Home Viewer Improvement Act—part of the Intellectual Property and Communications Omnibus Reform Act of 1999—will increase the ability of satellite companies to compete against cable companies, and will result in more customer choice, lower prices, and increased access to local news and information. This Act puts the TV remote control back into consumers' hands and competition at their fingertips. In addition, the patent reform legislation that the Administration has fought for will help meet the needs of America's inventors and entrepreneurs. It strengthens protection in a number of ways: it extends the term of a patent when there is an administrative delay in the patent process; it requires the timely domestic publication of patent applications that are also filed abroad; and it reinvents the Patent and Trademark Office as a performance-

based organization to better serve America's entrepreneurs and innovators.

Unfortunately, the Congress did not fund my additional request to protect the Nation's critical computer and information based infrastructures from a growing threat of cyber attack from hostile nations, terrorists, or criminals.

In order that \$68 million in interest accrued by the Abandoned Mine Land Fund (to be transferred to the United Mine Workers of America Combined Benefits Fund—designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement) not be scored against the discretionary spending caps, I hereby designate that amount as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended. I will shortly be designating other funds in this legislation as emergency requirements.

Finally, there are several provisions in the bill that purport to require congressional approval before Executive Branch execution of aspects of the bill. I will interpret such provisions to require notification only, since any other interpretation would contradict the Supreme Court ruling in *INS vs. Chadha*.

William J. Clinton

The White House
November 29, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 3194, approved November 29, was assigned Public Law No. 106-113. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 30.

Memorandum on an International Family Planning Waiver

November 29, 1999

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: International Family Planning Waiver

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 599D(c) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2000, as enacted by section 1000(a)(2) of Division B of H.R. 3194, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2000, I hereby waive the restrictions

contained in subsection 599D(b) to the full extent authorized by subsection 599D(c). This waiver shall take effect immediately and shall continue until the expiration of subsection 599D(b).

You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this waiver to the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 30.

Remarks Prior to Departure for San Francisco, California, and an Exchange With Reporters

November 30, 1999

Parental Leave

The President. Hello. Thank you. Good morning, ladies and gentleman. The people here with me at the podium are, obviously, Secretary Herman, but also Katie and Eric Banks and their son, Collin, of Fairfax, Virginia; Jonathan and Teresa Graham, and their two children, from Baltimore; Darsie Cahall and James Baker, and their three children, from Takoma Park, Maryland.

I'll say a little more about them in a moment. You can see this is a family event. [Laughter] We've orchestrated the children.

Before I leave for the World Trade Organization meeting on the West Coast, I want to talk a little about how we're using the strength of our economy to help strengthen working families.

Yesterday I signed a budget that maintains the fiscal responsibility that has given us what will be in February the longest economic expansion in our history and at the same time lives up to the values of the American people. We have no higher value than family, but too many of our families are having trouble balancing the demands of home and work. Today I'm using my Executive order—au-

thority—to give these parents new tools to succeed at home and on the job.

The surging technology and soaring prosperity we currently enjoy are the result of a lot of hard work and very long hours by the American people. In fact, today many working parents are forced to make the unacceptable choice between being good workers and good parents. Too often, in our round-the-world, round-the-clock economy, there just don't seem to be enough hours in the day for parents to do what they need to do. That's why we've worked hard to help parents balance work and family.

Last May I asked Secretary Herman to develop new ways to address this problem. Today I'm announcing a proposed Labor Department rule that lets States use their unemployment insurance to offer paid leave to new parents. This initiative is totally voluntary for States. It helps them empower more working parents, like the ones standing with me today. With this act, the United States joins the rest of the world's advanced economies, all of whom already have some form of paid leave for parents.

When little Collin was born, his mother, Katie, was working as a waitress; his dad was working as a head electrical technician for a small company. Unfortunately, he was born ill and had to be in intensive care for several weeks. Katie took unpaid leave and eventually quit her job to be with her son. Collin's dad, Eric, wanted to take leave but couldn't afford to do so. Once Collin was well enough, Katie looked for and, fortunately, landed another job. But both Katie and her husband would have and should have been able to take paid leave to care for their son. That's what this parental leave initiative is all about.

I believe giving States the flexibility to experiment with paid employment leave is one of the best things we can do to strengthen our families and help new mothers and fathers meet their responsibilities both at home and at work.

State flexibility and the voluntary nature of this effort are key to its success. In our strong economy, we hope States will take advantage of this new option, and we believe those that do will balance this new benefit with the imperative of maintaining a fiscally sound unemployment insurance program.

This effort builds on our commitment to giving working families more tools to help them adapt to the new economy, from expanding the earned-income tax credit to our welfare-to-work efforts, from increasing funding for child care to HOPE scholarships.

In the budget bill I signed yesterday, we fought for and won a doubling of resources for after-school programs to give young people a safe place to study between the end of their school day and the end of their parents' work day.

I'm especially proud that the first bill I signed as President, in 1993, was the family and medical leave law. Since then, millions of Americans—we believe well over 20 million—have used it to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a newborn or sick relative without losing their jobs. The importance of this benefit has been confirmed by the testimony of experts and parents at the first-ever White House Conference on Early Childhood Development, in 1997, and from groups like the American Academy of Pediatrics. They all reinforce what we already know from common sense, giving parents and primary care givers time to bond with children leads to healthy development including boosting critical language and literacy skills.

But the current law meets just a fraction of the need. And the number one reason families give for not taking advantage of family and medical leave is that they simply can't afford to take time off without a paycheck. The actions we take today will go a long way toward alleviating that burden if the States take up the challenge. I believe it will strengthen parents' bonds with both their children and their jobs.

As I've said, on the eve of this new century, we ought to set a goal that all parents can take time they need for their families, without losing the income they need to support them. The new State authority will move us in the right direction and gives another tool in our national efforts to both strengthen our families and reward the dignity of work.

Thank you very much.

Seattle Round

Q. Mr. President, what do you hope to achieve in Seattle at the WTO?

The President. Well, I hope we'll get a new round launched that will slash tariffs and other trade barriers in agriculture and other areas. I hope that we will agree to keep E-commerce free of unusual burdens and that we will lead to more transparent and open rules among nations so that they believe the trading system is fair.

I also strongly, strongly believe that we should open the process up to all those people who are now demonstrating on the outside. They ought to be a part of it. And I think we should strengthen the role and the interests of labor and the environment in our trade negotiations.

This is not going to be easy to do, partly because some nations, particularly a lot of developing nations, see our concern for the environment and labor standards as a way to sort of keep them down. But that is not true. What we want to do is to make sure that when we open the trading system, that ordinary Americans benefit.

In our country, about 30 percent of our growth has come from expanded trade. We have kept inflation down because we've kept our markets open and other people have been able to sell good quality products at lower prices in our markets. So we've had this huge growth with low inflation. I just want to make sure that ordinary people everywhere are benefited by the trading system and that the economy is not damaged by trading rules that could put short-term economic considerations over long-term environmental considerations.

So I'm very sympathetic with a lot of the causes being raised by all the people that are there demonstrating. And since this has now become a global society with global communications, as well as a global economy, I think it was unrealistic to assume that for the next 50 years, trade could be like it's been for the last 50, primarily the province of business executives and political leaders. I think more people are going to demand to be heard, and I think that's a good thing.

Deaths Due to Medical Mistakes

Q. Mr. President, yesterday a report documented the problem of medical mistakes, and said that 44,000 Americans, at least, are killed every year because of these medical

mistakes. What's your reaction to that, and is there anything that your administration is planning to do about it?

The President. Well, you may remember that we had a task force a couple of years ago, headed by Secretary Herman and Secretary Shalala, which issued, in fact, two reports: One of them recommended the Patients' Bill of Rights; the other set up a quality commission to deal with problems like this.

If you looked at it, to me, one of the most interesting things was that a lot of these hospitals, which are very overcrowded and have people coming in all the time and have doctors seeing all kinds of patients in rapid successions, have people lose their lives because of improper prescriptions of medicine, not knowing about a patient's allergy or not knowing about what other medication they're taking. That's a—and I think that we have an opportunity here to work with the public-private partnership which the task force set up to use modern technology, information technology, and to also do some basic old-fashioned changes in procedures that will save a lot of these lives.

I'm convinced we can do that. I talked yesterday, on the Patients' Bill of Rights, to one of the leading managed care providers in the country and suggested that they ought to be helping, too, and they agreed with that. We've all got to get together. No one has an interest in seeing these kinds of mistakes made. And we know that otherwise competent people are making a lot of these mistakes. So we've got to work through how we can use technology and how we can maybe even slow some of the actions to make sure that mistakes like this aren't made.

But I think we need—this is a very welcome report; we need to study it very carefully. And in order to get something done on it, it's going to take a partnership of everybody involved in health care.

Russia

Q. Mr. President, there's been yet another case of espionage from Russia. Are you concerned that there's some sort of epidemic of spying going on? And what does this say about U.S.-Russian relations?

The President. From where? From Russia? Well, I think what we should do is investigate this like we do all others. But I don't think we should stop our efforts to try to drastically cut nuclear weapons or end corruption in Russia or do all the other things we're supporting. I think this shows the importance of our work that the Congress ratified to continue to reduce the nuclear weapons in Russia and the nuclear threat associated with the decommissioning of nuclear weapons.

And I think that what we have to do is continue—we have to deal with espionage firmly, but we need to try to reduce the consequences of error and mistakes and wrongdoing.

Q. What do you hear about Yeltsin's health?

The President. I think it's a case of pneumonia. That's what they said. I checked on it yesterday, and they believe that he'll be all right.

Mass Graves in Mexico

Q. Mr. President, the Mexican Attorney General is reportedly saying that 22 Americans are among those found in the mass graves. Have you received any official word?

The President. No. I asked about it just before I came out here, actually, and I haven't. It's a horrible example, apparently, of the excesses of the drug dealing cartels in Mexico, and I think it reinforces the imperative of our not only trying to protect our border but to work with the Mexican authorities to try to combat these.

You know, we had a lot of success a few years ago in taking down a number of the Colombian drug cartels, and one of the adverse consequences of that was a lot of the operations were moved north into Mexico. And there are organized criminal operations there, and they are particularly vicious. You may remember that in that same area a couple of years ago, an honest and brave Mexican prosecutor was shot over a hundred times in front of his wife and child. So it's a very violent, dangerous thing, and we have to be on top of it.

Thank you.

Panama Canal

Q. Mr. President, why aren't you going to Panama? I mean, it's a major event in history.

The President. Well, first of all, I have taken, and may have to take—I've already taken, I think, a dozen foreign trips this year. It is a major event. I think my interest in Latin America is well-known, but I may have to take yet another trip before the end of the year, and about that time, which is why I asked President Carter and Secretary Albright to head our delegation.

I think that President Carter deserves enormous credit for his leadership in getting the Panama Canal Treaty through. It was, at the time, as you remember, very controversial, immensely unpopular. A lot of Members in the Senate were—had their seats put in peril over it. And I think it—

Q. So you're not against the turnover?

The President. Oh, no. I supported it at the time, and I still support it. I think it's the right thing to do. I think that the new Government of Panama is committed to maintaining the canal in an appropriate way and keeping it open and working with us to do so, and having good relations.

So no one in Panama or anywhere in Latin America should draw any adverse conclusion. We have a lot of things going on in the world now. I've been out of the country a lot. I need to get ready for the new Congress and the new budget, and I may have to take another foreign trip at about the same time, which is why I have not committed to make the trip. But I think—

Q. What, which one?

The President. I can't talk about it. [Laughter] But I think—I do think that Jimmy Carter deserves to lead our delegation down there. He did a historic and great thing in advocating the Panama Canal Treaty. But the people of Panama should know that this President and our Government strongly support both the treaty and the event, which will occur in a few days.

Q. You're not worried about the Chinese controlling the canal?

The President. I think the Chinese will, in fact, be bending over backwards to make sure that they run it in a competent and able and fair manner. This is like them, is like China coming into the WTO. I think they'll

want to demonstrate to a distant part of the world that they can be a responsible partner, and I would be very surprised if any adverse consequences flowed from the Chinese running the canal.

President's Possible Visit to Ireland

Q. When are you going to Ireland?

The President. I don't know. You know, I'd like to go once a month.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Boris Yeltsin of Russia.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Luncheon in San Francisco

November 30, 1999

Thank you very much. Thank you, Bill; thank you, Sally; thank you, Leader Gephardt; and thank you, Nancy Pelosi, for always being so wonderful to take all of your various charges from the D-triple-C to the DNC to your President into San Francisco and find your friends and help us.

It's good to be back here. I was here, as Bill said, a couple years ago. And we had a beautiful dinner here, and I love this place. But it's even more beautiful in the daylight. And I want to thank all the Members for coming. Chairman Torres, thank you for being here. And I want to thank the mayor for coming.

I am so indebted to California, and particularly to San Francisco, for being so good to me and Hillary and the Vice President and Mrs. Gore. And I've also learned so much. Every time I come to northern California I learn something new, so I'm less technologically challenged. [Laughter]

And I've learned a lot from Willie Brown. I've learned how to dress better. [Laughter] I never thought I would live long enough to see him in a race where somebody was running to the left of him; this is a great, great day. [Laughter] I don't know how there is any oxygen left over there. [Laughter] I'm still learning from you, and I thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Let me say also, this is the first opportunity I've had in public to thank Dick Gephardt

and all the others who are here in our caucus, and Senator Boxer, for their stalwart strength in fighting for our budget priorities. I just signed yesterday the first budget of the 21st century. And I think it's worth mentioning that because, and only because, they stayed with me, we got our continuing commitment to 100,000 teachers; we doubled, more than doubled, the funds allocated to after-school and summer school programs for children, something that Senator Boxer has fought for a long time; we've, for the first time ever, got funds to States that will agree to target failing schools and give them money to either shut them down or turn them around.

This was a remarkable thing. We got 50,000 more police for our neighborhoods with the highest crime rates. We passed the remarkable bill called the Kennedy-Jeffords bill, which will enable disabled people to go into the workplace and keep their Medicaid health insurance so that they can work and become taxpaying citizens. They would be totally uninsurable otherwise. We even got some money to pay for people who are not disabled yet but who are uninsurable—people with HIV, people with Parkinson's who can't be legally declared disabled—because they stuck with me. And we got for the first time a big chunk of money for the so-called lands legacy initiative that the Vice President fought so hard for, to set-aside funds. And a lot of other things.

We also left a lot of things undone. We didn't pass the Patients' Bill of Rights yet; we didn't pass the minimum wage increase yet; we didn't pass the hate crimes legislation yet or the "Employment and Non-Discrimination Act" yet; and we haven't yet taken the strong action I would like to see to extend Social Security beyond the life of the baby boom generation and to reform and modernize Medicare and add a prescription drug benefit.

We beat a huge and irresponsible tax cut, which enables us to continue to pay down the deficit, and we are now on the track to make America debt-free for the first time since 1835, which means that all these entrepreneurs in northern California will be able to get money at lower interest rates for another generation and to get us a whole generation of prosperity.

But what I want you to understand is it happened only because they were willing to stick with me. Otherwise, there would have been no 100,000 teachers, no 50,000 police, no disability employment bill. It would not have happened. We wouldn't have gotten the lands legacy money. All the environmental riders would have been attached to the legislation that we beat back. All of that would have happened. They stayed.

Now I want to put that in the larger perspective of where we've been, very briefly, for the last 7 years and where we're going, because, you know, people sometimes look at me and say, "What are you doing here? You're not running for anything." And I am, too—I'm running for what Mr. Gephardt said; I want to be a good citizen. And I'm here because I believe in Dick Gephardt's leadership, Nancy Pelosi's leadership, and the potential of our party.

One of you when you went through the line said to me, "Do you have any regrets?" And I said, "Just a few;" and I'm here trying to rectify one of them. I regret that we lost the congressional majority in 1994. And it happened because, frankly, because I pushed the country and the Congress to deal with some major challenges simultaneously: to deal with this awful budget deficit, without giving up on our commitment to invest more in the health care, in the education, in the environment of our country; to take on the issue of guns, which no administration, no Congress had taken on since Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King were assassinated; and to deal with the health care crisis.

One of Dick's colleagues said to me the other day—he slapped me on the back and said, "You know, they told me if I voted for your health care program, health care would become more bureaucratic and fewer people would be insured at work. And I voted for it and, sure enough, that's what happened"—[laughter]—"health care has become more bureaucratic and fewer people are insured at work, because it didn't pass." [Laughter]

So I say to you, look at the record that these people have helped us to establish. In 1992—just remember what California was

like and the country was like: economic distress, social division, political drift, Government discredited. Don't let anybody forget that as we come into this session. Just ask them to remember what it was like in '91 and '92: economic distress, social division, political drift, Government discredited.

And you gave Al Gore and I a chance to work with them. And we said we want a country where there is opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a community of all Americans, where everybody can be a part. And we had all these ideas. But you just bought an argument. Well, 7 years later, there is not an argument. There is evidence. And I think that it's worth repeating, because—I know I'm preaching to the choir here, but you need to go out and share this—in February we'll have the longest, not peacetime, the longest expansion of any kind in our history; we have 19.8 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest poverty rates in 20 years, the highest homeownership in history.

In addition to that, the society is healing. We have the lowest crime rates in 25 years, the lowest teen pregnancy rates in 30 years. We have the lowest female unemployment rates in 40 years and the lowest poverty rate among single-parent households in 40 years. And we've set aside more land than any administration except those of Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt, including 40 million roadless acres in the national forests. The land is safer; the water is cleaner; the air is cleaner. We've cleaned up three times as many toxic waste dumps as the previous two administrations. We have 90 percent of our kids immunized for the first time in history; 20 million people have taken advantage of the family and medical leave law, which was vetoed by the previous administration. Four hundred thousand people who shouldn't get guns have not been able to buy handguns because of the Brady bill, which was vetoed by the previous administration.

So I say to you this is not an argument anymore. There is evidence, and I want you to remember those numbers. And when you talk to the skeptics and you talk to the doubters, you need to go out and tell people what the evidence is. And if you look ahead, the

real issue is—and Dick talked about this—you know I want them to be in the majority because of the issue of education, because there is still a lot more to be done. I want them to be in the majority because I do believe they will help to conduct their business in a way that will promote the one America that I believe is so important.

I am very proud of the fact that the United States has played a major role in trying to reconcile warring and hating factions from Northern Ireland to the Middle East to the Balkans to Africa. But I want us to do that at home, too, which is why I want this hate crimes legislation to pass. You only have to look at what happened at the Jewish school in Los Angeles or to the Filipino postman who was murdered there or what happened in the rampage in the Middle West, where everybody from the former African-American basketball coach at Northwestern to a Korean Christian walking out of his church—these people were killed—James Byrd dragged to death, Matthew Shepard stretched out on a rack. There is still a lot of that in us.

And what I would like to just ask you to think about and what I think about all the time is, okay, we've had all these good things happen to us, and our country now, thanks to a lot of you and technology—I should have mentioned when I became—when we started NetDay here in 1994, 15 percent of our schools were connected to the Internet; 89 percent are now, thanks to a lot of you and the E-rate. I could just go on and on. You need to remember these things and talk to people about them.

But the big question is, what are we going to do now? What will we do with a moment of prosperity that is, in my lifetime unprecedented. Never in my life have we had this much economic strength, this much social progress, this kind of opportunity free of external threat or internal crisis to shape the future for our children. What are we going to do about it?

And there will be all kinds of siren songs in the election season to kind of distract people from that or to get us to lower our sights or be more selfish or be more shortsighted. And the truth is, I bet you every one of you can cite some point in your personal life, your

family life, or your business life when you got in trouble because things were going well and you broke your concentration. You relaxed; you got diverted; you got divided; you got indulgent.

Well, the country is no different. We have to realize this is a truly precious moment. In my lifetime, it has never happened. And the reason I want Dick Gephardt to be the Speaker is I think that we ought to—yes, we made a lot of advances in education, but we don't have a world-class education for all our children, and we shouldn't stop until we do. Yes, we continue to pay down the debt at record rates, and we've got the first back-to-back balanced budgets in 42 years. But we haven't extended Social Security beyond the life of the baby boom generation; we haven't extended Medicare and added that prescription drug benefit when 75 percent of the seniors in this country can't afford the medicine they're supposed to take. So we haven't dealt with the challenge of the aging of America as much as we should.

We haven't done everything we should do to make this the safest big country in the world. We ought to close the gun show loophole in the Brady bill. We ought to pass the child trigger lock legislation. It's not just crimes that are the problem. We have the biggest accidental death rate by guns in the world. And to give you an idea of how bad it is, the American death rate, accidental death rate from guns, is 9 times the rate of the next 25 biggest industrial economies combined. So I think it's worth a little extra to have those child trigger locks.

We've still got serious challenges in health care. We ought to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights. We ought to let people over 55 who don't have health insurance anymore buy into Medicare. We ought to continue our work to help children, enroll children in our health insurance program and cover other people who don't have it.

We've got a chance to do something serious about poverty for the first time in a generation. One of the things that I'm most encouraged about on our side in the Presidential debate is there is an almost complete consensus that part of our bounty ought to be used to drastically cut child poverty in this country. And that's good. We also have an

opportunity that we have not had in my lifetime to bring free enterprise and investment into the most distressed areas of the country. And I have been going around the country trying to highlight these things.

I consider this a big opportunity. And as all of you who live on the Internet know, technology gives us a chance to bring economic opportunity to people and places that were hitherto too isolated to take advantage of it.

Now these are just some of the big challenges that are out there. And I promise you, I fought through this last budget. I've been through this thing now from can't til can't for 6 years. I'm here because I do not believe my country will realize its full potential unless they are in the majority and unless he is the Speaker. And I think if he is, they will.

So I ask you, tell people what was in the budget and why. Tell people what's happened in the last 7 years and why. And most important, tell people what we can do in the future if we have the right people representing you, and help them win. It is profoundly important.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Bill and Sally Hembrecht; Art Torres, chair, State Democratic Party; and Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr., of San Francisco.

Statement on the Anniversary of the Brady Handgun and Violence Prevention Act

November 30, 1999

Today, on the sixth anniversary of the historic Brady law, I am pleased to announce new figures that demonstrate the profound impact this legislation has had on public safety. Data released today by the Department of Justice show that the Brady law, since its passage in 1993, has helped block over 470,000 sales by licensed gun dealers to felons, fugitives, stalkers, and others prohibited from purchasing firearms. In the last year alone, the National Instant Criminal Background Check System created under the Brady law has blocked sales to over 160,000 of these restricted buyers. These numbers,

of course, are not just numbers. They represent lives saved, injuries avoided, tragedies averted. They are a measure of what we can do to reduce gun violence—and a measure of what still needs to be done.

In addition to our success with the Brady law, this administration has taken important actions to crack down on the illegal market that supplies juveniles and criminals with firearms. Today Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers will launch the newest tool to fight illegal gun dealing—“Online LEAD,” a new technology to help law enforcement across the country use crime-gun tracing data to catch more illegal gun traffickers more quickly. As a result of these efforts and those of communities across the country, violent gun crime is down by over 35 percent since 1992, and the murder rate is at its lowest level in over three decades. But while we are more effective than ever before at keeping guns out the wrong hands, our work is by no means finished. Over 32,000 Americans still lose their lives in gun-fire every year, including 12 children every day. That is why I pledge to make passage of commonsense gun legislation my top public safety priority next year. And I challenge Congress to make a New Year’s resolution to do the same.

Statement on Signing the Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act

November 30, 1999

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 2116, the “Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act.” This comprehensive bill will improve a broad array of benefits and services for those to whom we owe our freedoms—our Nation’s veterans.

This bill is especially significant for its approach in the provision of enhanced extended-care services to veterans. It firmly establishes that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) should accord the highest priority for nursing home care to the most severely disabled veterans and those needing care for service-connected disabilities. It will also ensure that veterans enrolled in the VA health care system receive noninstitutional,

extended-care services, including geriatric evaluations and adult day health care.

The bill also expands opportunities for military retirees to utilize VA health care services, at Department of Defense (DoD) expense and in accordance with an agreement to be developed by DoD and VA. The DoD and VA will ensure this agreement allows for the provision of high-quality managed care and increased choice, in the most cost-effective manner for the Federal Government.

This bill includes many other important health care provisions. For example, H.R. 2116:

- Expands veterans’ eligibility for reimbursement of emergency care costs when VA or other Federal health care facilities are not accessible.
- Extends and expands VA’s authority to provide health care services to victims of sexual trauma.
- Makes more active duty personnel eligible for VA substance dependency treatment.
- Authorizes VA to update the schedule of copayments charged for certain health care benefits to generate additional program funds.

I am also pleased that the bill will make it easier for surviving spouses of disabled former prisoners of war to qualify for survivor benefits; expand certain education benefit entitlements; extend VA’s authority to guarantee home loans for members of the Selected Reserve; and both extend and enhance programs for homeless veterans.

These are but the high points of a comprehensive bill that will enhance many benefits and services our veterans and their families justly deserve. I thank all who were involved in its passage.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 30, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 2116, approved November 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106–117.

Statement on Signing the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 1999

November 30, 1999

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 2280, the "Veterans Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 1999," which provides a 2.4 percent cost-of-living adjustment in benefits for service-disabled veterans and their surviving spouses and children. It provides for increased rates in payments of service-connected disability compensation to veterans who suffer from service-related disabilities and in payments of dependency and indemnity compensation for the surviving spouses and children of service members and veterans whose deaths are service-related. The increased benefit rates will take effect on December 1, 1999. This legislation, derived from an Administration proposal, ensures that the value of these well-deserved benefits will keep pace with increases in consumer prices.

As a country, we must remember those veterans who gave of themselves to assure the continued protection of this great Nation. The freedoms and liberty that we enjoy as citizens depend on the men and women in our Armed Forces. In a tangible way, this legislation expresses the gratitude of the Nation for the sacrifices our veterans have unselfishly endured.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 30, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 2280, approved November 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106-118.

Message on the Observance of Hanukkah, 1999

November 30, 1999

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Hanukkah.

This joyous Festival of Lights commemorates the rededication of the Jews' Holy Temple by the Maccabees after their victory over oppression and the rekindling of the Temple's sacred oil lamp. That victory, recounted in ancient Jewish writings, is one of history's

earliest recorded battles for religious freedom. More than two thousand years have passed since Judah the Maccabee and his courageous followers refused to reject their faith in God, their customs, and their religious traditions; but today people across the globe still struggle for the freedom to worship according to their own conscience.

As Jews throughout America and around the world gather with family and friends to light the menorah and remember the miracle of God's presence in our lives and history, let us all give thanks for the blessed light of religious freedom in our nation. And let us be mindful, in our thoughts, prayers, and actions, of those who still must live in the shadow of oppression.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes to all for a memorable Hanukkah observance and for peace and joy in the coming year.

Bill Clinton

Remarks at a "Stop the Violence" Benefit in Beverly Hills, California

November 30, 1999

Thank you very much. We can pass laws, but we can't fix this podium here. [*Laughter*] Maybe I'll stand up on it, how's that? [*Laughter*]

I love Whoopi Goldberg. The greatest thing about being President is that nearly anybody will come talk to you. [*Laughter*] Some will talk for you; some will talk against you; some will talk at you, but nearly anybody will come talk to you. And so I've had the honor of meeting all kinds of people from all walks of life.

But when I met Whoopi Goldberg—and I was already sort of a big fan, you know—but I looked at her, and I thought, now, there is a woman who will be my friend. [*Laughter*] You know, there have been times when I'm sure my friendship has been somewhat embarrassing to her. [*Laughter*] And times when her jokes have caused me some discomfort in public. [*Laughter*] But I'm not a hypocrite about that. I'm with her through thick and thin. [*Laughter*] And she has certainly been with me though thick and thin.

Of all the people that I know, I continue to be amazed by how generous truly busy

and successful people are. But Whoopi, you have been so generous to me and to my family and our administration, and in so doing, you've been generous to America. And I thank you for that.

I thank Beau Bridges for being here and for his leadership and for telling his story; for portraying everyone from Jim Brady to P.T. Barnum. *[Laughter]* Sarah, when you get home, you tell Jim I said that I thought he was just playing the same role twice. *[Laughter]*

I thank Steve Sposato for being here and being so faithful to this call. I have on the wall of my private office, which is just off the Oval Office, a picture of Steve and Megan Sposato, which he gave me shortly after I signed the assault weapons ban. I see it every day still, and every day it is an inspiration to me to continue to work on the issues we come here tonight to support.

And I thank Sarah Brady for being my friend and my guiding light. I thank Representatives Sherman and Berman and Becerra, who are here; and Senator Dianne Feinstein, who isn't, and Senator Barbara Boxer, who flew out to California with me today—they have both been terrific on all these issues.

I talked to Governor Davis a couple of hours before I got here, and he said to tell you all hello, and he is justifiably proud of the record he established in this recent session of the legislature.

And let me, lastly, by way of introduction, congratulate this year's "Pete" Shields Award-winner, Gregory Peck, for sharing his many gifts with the world. And Veronique, thank you.

You know, we meet in this wonderful old, historic Hollywood home tonight, and it gives me the opportunity to say once again that I have been, since I was a small child, an ardent movie fan. I don't know how many Gregory Peck movies I have seen and enjoyed. But I think that his remarkable performance as Atticus Finch, of all the roles that he played, probably was closer to the person Gregory Peck really is.

There is a wonderful moment in Harper Lee's classic when Atticus sits down to talk with his children about courage. He says, "I want you to know that real courage isn't a

man with a gun. It's when the odds are against you, but you begin anyway, and you see it through no matter what." Steve Sposato, you have done that. Sarah, you and Jim have done that. And we thank you.

I am honored to be here tonight. I have come to California many times pursuing the work of this administration. Often I have come to this town that has been so wonderful to Hillary and me and asked for funds to continue our campaigns or our work. Tonight the main reason I'm here is to say a simple thank you. Thank you for what you're doing to support the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence; for supporting its groundbreaking research, its public education, its coalition building, its leading light to protect families from gun violence.

Thank you for all you've done year after year to support our administration's initiatives to build safer streets and stronger communities. Thank you for championing the Brady bill; as Sarah said, I signed it into law 6 years ago today. Thank you for supporting the assault weapons ban. Thank you for supporting the 100,000 community police officers on our streets and programs to help keep our children out of trouble. It is working. Today—*[applause]*—yes, you can clap for that.

Today in America the crime rate is at a 25-year low; the murder rate at a 31-year low; violent crime down 35 percent since 1992, with the longest continuous decline in the crime rate in our Nation's history. On this 6th anniversary of the Brady bill, I want you to know that the latest figures are in and the Brady bill has now helped to block more than 470,000 gun sales by licensed gun dealers to felons, fugitives, and stalkers—470,000. And in the last year alone, the National Instant Criminal Background Check system has blocked gun sales to more than 160,000 people.

Now these are more than numbers. Remember Steve's story. These are 470,000 acts of community conscience and common mercy. They have saved lives, avoided injuries, averted tragedies. Yesterday I signed the new budget bill. And I want to thank the Member of Congress here who stood with

me to make sure this budget will begin putting up 50,000 more community police officers on top of the 100,000 we've already funded, targeted to the most dangerous streets left in our country; provide new crime-fighting technology to police; and more than double after-school programs to keep more kids out of trouble and in safe environments.

I want to also thank you for being a source of strength and courage to all of us in our larger administration family, to Hillary, who urged me every step of the way to push for the Brady bill, to push for the assault weapons ban, to continue to push and take on this issue; who reminded me that because I grew up in the South, and first shot a .22 when I was 12, and understood the mind set of the people, the good people, who uncritically followed the NRA into the voting booth year-in and year-out, that I had a special responsibility to deal with this issue.

And she asked me to tell you, hello. I just talked to her about 30 minutes ago, and I thank you for that.

I want to thank you on behalf of Vice President Gore, who cast the tie-breaking vote in the bill to close the gun show loophole that passed the Senate. And I want to thank you on behalf of Tipper Gore, who has done so much to see that Americans with mental illness get treatment and not more handguns.

But I didn't just come to say thanks, because we have a lot more to do. When the Brady bill finally passed Congress and was signed, rather than vetoed, by me—[*laughter*]*—*someone asked Sarah, "Well, what are you going to do now?" And without missing a beat she said, "I'm going to keep fighting."

So I come here to tell you, you have to keep fighting. Because even though America is safer from Columbine High School to the Jewish community center in Grenada Hills to the Wedgewood Baptist Church in Fort Worth, and every community in between and beyond, no one believes America is as safe as it should be or can be.

Still, 12 children die every day from gun violence. And America is not acceptably safe when the rate of children under 15 killed accidentally by guns—listen to this—the rate of children under 15 killed accidentally by guns is 9 times higher than the rate of the

25 next biggest industrial nations combined. Now, what do we have to keep fighting for? For what works.

Seven years ago a lot of people did not believe we could get the crime rate down. And when the Brady bill come up again in Congress they said—I remember what they said—they said, "Oh, this Brady bill will not make a difference because criminals and kooks don't buy guns at gun stores." Do you remember that? That's what they said. And we said, "Well, we think it will. And besides that, it's not that big an inconvenience to have everybody go through the background check." Well, 470,000 rejections later we know it did make a difference. The same people, I might add, said that if we put 100,000 community police out there, it wouldn't make a difference; if we passed the assault weapons ban, it wouldn't make a difference. Well, they were wrong. They were just wrong.

Now, I come here to suggest that the time has come to set a different goal. Let me just sort of parenthesis a minute. I want you all to think about this as citizens in the context of gun violence and every other thing America needs to do.

In my lifetime—a 6-year-old boy asked me this weekend, who was visiting my family on Thanksgiving, he said, "How old are you?" And I said, "I'm 53." And he said, "That's a lot." [*Laughter*] Well, I guess so. [*Laughter*]

But in my lifetime—and that's a lot—[*laughter*]*—*there has never been a time ever, not even once, when our country had this remarkable combination of economic prosperity, social progress, self-confidence, and the absence of external threat and internal crisis, so that we are freer than we have ever been in my lifetime as a people to shape the future of our dreams for our children.

And the great question before the American people is not whether we'll change it, as how we will change and whether we will do that. And I'll bet you everybody here can remember an instance in your personal life, in your family life, and in your work life when you squandered a terrific opportunity because things were going so well, you thought you could relax; and you got diverted; you got divided; you got distracted. You just blew

it. And countries are no different than people, families, and enterprises. That's what countries are.

So the great question before us as a people is, what are we going to make of this magic moment to deal with the challenge of educating all our children, to deal with the challenge of the aging of America, to deal with the challenge of getting poor people an opportunity to be part of our prosperity, to deal with the challenge of environmental preservation? And I could go on and on.

Now, I have a modest proposal here that, if I had said it 7 years ago when I was running for President, people would have said, "Well, he seems like a nice young man, but we ought to send him home because he's touched." [Laughter] But 7 years ago, people didn't believe we could get the crime rate down. Okay. We've got the lowest crime rate in 25 years and the lowest murder rate in 31 years, and there's not a single soul here who believes this country is as safe as it ought to be. So I say, let's set a goal now that is really worth fighting for. Let's say we're not going to stop until the freest big country on Earth is the safest big country on Earth. [Applause]

Now, to achieve that, we just have to keep doing what we've been doing. We have to keep moving the ball forward and resisting the same old arguments in new guises. We have to pass the commonsense gun safety legislation Congress failed to pass last year in the aftermath of Columbine. We have to, one, build on the success of the Brady bill by closing the gun show loophole.

Now, let me remind you—I don't know how many of you have ever been to a gun show, but I have been. That was sort of a mandatory stop when I was the Governor of my, what my distinguished opponent in 1992 said was a small Southern State. [Laughter] I've been to these things, you know, down a country road, alley, pickups and cars on both sides, trunks up, guns in the trunk. The same crowd that said—in 1993 when we were trying to pass the Brady bill, they said, "All these criminals, they don't buy guns at gun stores; they buy all their guns at flea markets and gun shows and all that. So this Brady bill won't do any good."

So we did the Brady bill, 470,000 rejections later they now say, "Oh, it won't do any good to close the gun show loophole." I wanted to go back and read them what they said in '93. That's sort of the just-say-no crowd. [Laughter] But I'm telling you—I'm telling you—we still have too many people getting guns at these gun shows and at urban flea markets, and there ought to be background checks. And it will make a difference. That's the first thing we have to do.

The second thing we have to do is build on the success of the assault weapons ban by closing the gaping loophole there which still allows the legal importation of large-capacity ammunition clips. They ought to be banned from import. We don't need them.

The third thing we ought to do—remember the statistic I gave you on accidental child deaths—we ought to require child safety trigger locks on the sale of all new handguns in this country.

Congress ought to follow the lead of California and pass my proposals to ban handgun sales to one a month, to limit them to one a month and once again to require the Brady waiting period to allow a cooling off period. Just because we've got the instant background checks doesn't mean we still don't need the waiting period. The waiting period causes people who may not have a criminal background, and who may be in some frenzy, to wait a few days, calm down, and it will save lives. We need to reinstitute it on a national basis.

I also ask for your support for two non-gun-related initiatives, our national grass-roots campaign against youth violence, headed by a California activist, Jeff Weiss, and our hate crimes legislation.

I want to make just two general points in closing. One of the previous speakers mentioned that I had stood up to the NRA. It made me rather unpopular with one member of this community out here. [Laughter] But I'll tell you a story.

I vetoed a bill—I think I was the only Southern Governor that ever vetoed a bill passed by the NRA in the State legislature, and it was in the late 1980's. They were going around—this conservative group—you know

conservative groups believe in limited national or State authority, maximum local authority. They had a bill they were trying to pass in every legislature in the country to prohibit local governments from having gun laws more stringent than State government. There was a reason for that. State governments tend to be dominated by rural legislators, whereas local urban governments tend to be more interested in keeping cop-killer bullets out of guns that can kill police officers wearing bullet-proof vests, for example.

So they thought this was a big threat to the Constitution and our individual liberty, so they wanted to stop all these local governments from doing this. And they passed such a bill in my legislature, and I vetoed it. And my legislature was really good. They knew that they didn't want to be in a position of overriding my veto, but they didn't want to be in the position of having the NRA go after them in the election. And so they waited until late in the session to pass it, and they were gone when I vetoed it, so they didn't have to face the fact whether they would override it or not. It was a great deal.

So then 1990 comes along—this is a true story, I want you all to remember this. I never will forget this. This not a joke, and I'm glad we're laughing because otherwise we would be crying about this.

So 1990 comes along and the NRA comes up with this bill again. And they send a lobbyist from Washington to Little Rock to lobby for the bill. I'll never forget this guy. He was a real big, fine looking young man, a couple inches taller than me, very well dressed. One day he came up to me in the rotunda of our State capitol, which is sort of a miniversion of the National Rotunda, you know, and everything echoes.

And this young man came up to me, and it was like the E.F. Hutton ad, you know, everybody got really silent. [Laughter] And this guy says, "Now, Governor, Governor," he says, "I want you to just let this bill become law without your signature. You don't have to do anything." I said, "I can't do that. I think your bill stinks." He said, "All right, Governor, it's this way. I think you're going to run for President, and when you do, if you veto this bill, we're going to beat your brains out in the Texas primary." And all of

a sudden everybody got real quiet. There must have been 50 of my legislators standing there. And I said, "Young man, you just don't understand, do you? I think your bill stinks." And I said, "Not only that, you know this is a conservative State. You know we're not going to pass any sweeping gun control legislation here. You know that we've got this big influx of gang warfare in a couple of our areas. And it won't hurt anybody if the local government here in Little Rock decides to ban cop-killer bullets. The reason you're trying to pass this bill is back in Washington, in your national headquarters, there's a big chart on the wall, and this bill is at the top of the chart, and all the States are listed down the side, and you want to be able to put a little check by Arkansas." I said, "This doesn't have anything to do with the safety of our children or the freedom of people to hunt." And I said, "If that's the way you feel, you just get your gun, and I'll get mine, and I'll meet you in Texas." [Laughter] So, anyway, we lost Texas in the general election by a few points—[laughter]—but got 67 percent there in the Democratic primary in 1992. So it didn't work very well.

So anyway, so then we go in 1993, and we got the Brady bill. In 1994 we got the assault weapons ban. And it was very difficult for a lot of our people. That's what I want to tell you. We're all here, preaching to the saved, patting each other on the back. Let me tell you something. When these votes are cast in the State legislature and the Congress, there are people who put their seats on the line to do this because not everybody has the same views that you do and not everybody has had the chance to talk about this.

And one of the reasons there is a Republican majority in the House of Representatives today is that I got them to vote on both the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban in my first 2 years as President. And there were a lot of people, I want you to know, there were a lot of people who laid their seats in Congress down so that there would be fewer people like Jim and Sarah Brady and Steve and Megan Sposato. They lost their seats in Congress to do that.

I never will forget, in 1996 I went back to New Hampshire. We had one Democratic

Congressman and one Republican Congressman when I became President, and they beat the Democrat, largely because he voted for these bills. And I went back to Manchester, and I went there, and as I remember, it was on a weekend morning. I went to it, and I said, "I want to get with a bunch of guys that I know go deer hunting and that I know are big sportsmen and that I know are mad about all this." And I had carried—Al Gore and I carried New Hampshire in '92, which is very rare because it is basically a Republican State in the Presidential election.

And so I got all these guys together, and I said, "Let me tell you something. I know you beat your Congressman in 1994 in part because he voted for the assault weapons ban and the Brady bill. And I want you to know he did it because I asked him to. So if there is a living soul here who has been inconvenienced one iota in your hunting season because of what we did, then I want you to vote against me, too. But if you haven't been, they lied to you and you need to get even." [Laughter]

We got, in a three-way race in 1996, a majority of the vote in the State of New Hampshire. I say that not to be self-congratulatory but to say the answer here is not to shrivel up, turn aside, or ignore the obligation to communicate with people who are not in this tent tonight. We have to continue to broaden the base.

Look, this is about—it's bought on these two competing views of what liberty is. The view espoused by the NRA and others is that guns don't kill people, people do. That may be true, but people without guns don't kill as many people as people with guns.

So the issue is—go back to what Whoopi said about us all being connected. We've got to go out to people who may live in very rural areas and say, "Look if you carry this argument to its ultimate conclusion, we'll be in total anarchy." We've got a lot of people being killed by—you know these poor people in the Middle West—the former basketball coach at Northwestern, an African-American—killed by the same guy—then he turns around and kills a young Korean Christian walking out of his church, and kills two or three other people, and he says he belongs to a church that doesn't believe in God but

does believe in white supremacy. And I could go on and on and on. You know all these stories.

Now their answer is well, that we need a concealed weapons law and every law-abiding person needs to carry a weapon. And if you take it to an extreme—I saw—I get my hometown paper still at the White House—I saw—we have a State legislator at home that says the answer to all these school shootings may be to have all the teachers go to the law enforcement academy and get trained to start carrying guns to school. [Laughter]

Now you laugh about that, but that is the ultimate extension of the argument that, you know, we're all these sort of isolated individuals, and the last thing we can do is to have some common set of rules that we all follow.

Now, we don't do that in other ways. We all give up a little of our liberty in theory when we walk through those airport metal detectors. Why? Well, we know we can't all pilot our own airplanes. And it's a matter of inconvenience to go take off your brass belt buckle or take your metal money clip out of your pocket and go through there again for the security of knowing that there is no terrorist on the plane. So you never hear anybody gripe about that anymore, do you?

This is the same principle. You cannot be in a society where you are really free, unless your freedom is designed to enhance the freedom of all people in the community. And if you're not safe, you're not free. And we need to leave here tonight with a clear commitment to continue to take this debate to people and places—who are good people, who still don't accept this argument, because we have a lot more to do.

You clapped when I said we ought to make this the safest big country in the world. We can do it and still have a vibrant hunting and sporting culture. But we cannot do it if we labor under the illusion that we have no responsibilities to one another that require us to show mutual restraint when it comes to this gun issue. And therefore, we have to continue to work on this. This is a huge, huge issue that will go a long way to defining what kind of country we are.

And it goes to this whole hate crimes issue, and I will just close with this. I think it is

really ironic that on the edge of a new millennium when we are—we've got now 90 percent of our schools connected to the Internet, when we're unlocking the mysteries of the human genome—in a few years, we'll know what is in the black holes in space—when we'll be able to have little computer chips, before you know it, that we can insert into broken parts of people's bodies, including nerve centers in the spine and elsewhere and restore normal movement. When we are thinking about all of these marvelous things that are going to happen, it is amazing that the biggest problem we face as a society is perhaps the oldest demon of human society, the fear and hatred of people who are different from us: They are a different race; they're a different religion; they're gay; they're whatever. And this whole issue of gun violence and how we handle it as a community and how we approach people who are different from us are related.

I've been working for years on this Irish peace process. It looks like we're going to make it. One of the provisions of the Irish peace agreement is its paramilitary groups should lay down their weapons of war. In the Middle East, one of the provisions of the Wye peace agreement and the modified version that Prime Minister Barak and Mr. Arafat agreed to is that there should be some laying down of the weapons of war. In Bosnia, where I just was, looking at children who got to go home and were uprooted and driven out and seeing them back in their schools and trying to get people to lay down their hatreds and say, "Look, I know you can't lay down your hatreds tomorrow, although you ought to try, but, meanwhile, you've got to lay down your weapons of war."

And so it's all about how you really define community, as just a label, or do we have some mutual responsibilities here? And I say to you if I could have sort of one wish for America—if somebody said to me, "You don't have another year. You've got to go tomorrow, but you're like a genie, you get to give America one wish." I'd make this country one America. I would have our people understanding that our diversity is our strength because our common humanity is more important, and that imposes on us common responsibilities.

I wish that we had done more in gun safety than we have. I know we can do more, as I said, and still leave all those people that I grew up with and that I represented and that I love, the right to their hunting and sporting past times. It's a big part of our culture. But we should not tolerate a society where people can still readily get these horrible weapons of destruction for no other purpose than to kill other people. It should be much, much harder for profoundly disturbed children, like those kids at Columbine, to get the kind of weapons they got. We can do better.

Yes, I'm very grateful that I've been privileged to work with Sarah and Steve and Senator Feinstein and Senator Boxer and the Representatives still here to do what we've done. But if you really want to make the most of this moment, you've got to keep going until we make America the world's safest big country. And if you want to do that, you have to reach out beyond those of us in this tent to the heart and soul of America and say, "Listen, we are blessed, but we have a lot to do and we have responsibilities to one another we have not fulfilled. And as we do that we will become more free, not less free."

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:07 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to comedian Whoopi Goldberg; actor Beau Bridges; former White House Press Secretary James S. Brady, who was wounded in the 1981 assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan; Mr. Brady's wife, Sarah, chair, Handgun Control, Inc.; Steven Sposato, whose wife, Megan, was killed by a gunman in a San Francisco law office; Gov. Gray Davis of California; actor Gregory Peck and his wife, Veronique; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. The President also referred to the Public Safety and Recreational Firearms Use Protection Act, subtitle A of title XI (Public Law No. 103-322); the Brady Act (Public Law No. 103-159); and H.R. 3194, consolidated appropriations legislation for fiscal year 2000, approved November 29, assigned Public Law No. 106-113. The benefit was sponsored by the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

**Remarks at a Southwest Voter
Registration and Education Project
Reception in Beverly Hills**

November 30, 1999

Thank you very much, Antonio. I am delighted to be here. I know that all of you have come in support of the Southwest Voter Education Project. But I want to thank especially my good friend Gloria Molina; and Henry Cisneros; Assembly Speaker Villarraigosa—I see him over there; we’ve been making the rounds tonight; Congressman Becerra. And I think Lydia Camarillo, our DNC CEO, is here. I know this is a non-partisan event, but I wanted to acknowledge her presence there. Thank you, Lydia.

I have known about the Southwest Voter Education Project a long time, from the beginning. And one of the great honors I had as President was to award the Medal of Freedom to Willie Velasquez posthumously in 1995. The Southwest Voter Education Project has now registered, I believe, over 2 million Latino voters and well over 2,000 voter education drives.

And what I would—I just want to say a couple of things briefly tonight. Yesterday I signed the budget that we passed in the Congress right before they went home, the first budget of the 21st century. It contained the second year’s funding for our Hispanic education project, which is designed to reduce the gap in high school graduation rates between Hispanics and other children and to increase the college going rate. And I just give you that as one little example, although it is a very big thing—I think this is going to have a huge impact over the years if we keep doing it—of why it is so important for people to be registered and to vote.

I was thinking tonight about the meetings I’ve had with the Hispanic caucus. And Congressman Torres, we miss you. I’m glad to see you. Thank you for everything.

But what I was thinking about is, two things are certain. One is that the number of Hispanic Members of Congress will grow. The second, maybe more important, is the number of Latino voters in other districts will grow. And I honestly believe that the willingness of people to register and to vote will have a profoundly significant impact on sort

of the shape of American politics, on our immigration policies, on our education policies, on our economic policies, on the nature of our trade policies, and I could go on and on and on.

I have seen, just in the last two election cycles the profound difference it makes in terms of who shows up to vote. In 1998 the overall percentage of Americans voting was not that different from 1994, but the composition of those who voted was very different. And very often 4 or 5 percent of the people, whether they stay or go, will reflect the sort of accumulated feelings of maybe 60 or 70 percent of the American electorate. And whether they do or not, I can promise you, will affect the whole sweep of policy. I’m very conscious of this now. And I just want to mention one or two issues.

It has been, for me, an enormous privilege to serve as President these last 7 years. I have had a great deal of help from the most diverse group of Americans ever to serve an administration, including former HUD Secretary Cisneros. And I am very grateful that we have now the results that we have. We’ve got—in February we’ll have the longest peacetime expansion in our history. We have already nearly 20 million new jobs. We have the lowest unemployment in 30 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest poverty rates in 30 years. We have the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest Hispanic and African-American unemployment rates ever recorded, the lowest African-American poverty rate ever recorded, the lowest Hispanic poverty rate in a generation, the lowest poverty rate among single-parent households in 40 years, the lowest unemployment among women in 40 years. What I want to ask you is, what do you mean to do with this? What do you mean to do with this?

I had—I see my sister-in-law, Molly, over there. We just had my big, extended family and Hillary’s family were all together for Thanksgiving. And we gathered up at Camp David, and then we had some of our friends come in from the area. And I had a bunch of little kids there. And this 6-year-old boy looked at me a couple days ago, and he said, “How old are you?” [*Laughter*] And I said, “I’m 53.” He said, “That’s a lot.” [*Laughter*]

And I regretted to say I had to agree with him; it was a lot.

In my lifetime—and that's a lot—our country has never had this level of economic prosperity, social progress, and national confidence, and at the same time been free of external threats and internal crises, so that we are essentially free to face our big challenges and build the future of our dreams for our children.

So the real question is not whether we are going to change, because the world is changing at such a rapid rate that that's not an option. The real question is, how will we change, and what will we do with this chance of a lifetime?

I hope we will use it to meet the big challenges of the future. But I'll bet you every adult in this room can remember at least one, and maybe more, times in your personal life, your family life, or your work life when you made a big mistake because things were going well. When you should have been thinking about the long term, you got diverted, distracted, divided, and the moment was lost.

Now in my lifetime, we have never had a moment like this. We need to use it to give all of our children a world-class education. We need to use it to dramatically reduce poverty among our children and to bring economic opportunity to people and places that have been left out of this remarkable recovery. We need to use it to deal with the challenge of the aging of America and take Social Security out beyond the life of the baby boom generation and extend the life of Medicare and give prescription drug coverage to 75 percent of our seniors who can't afford the medicine they need today.

We need to use it to prove we can grow the economy and improve the environment. We need to use it to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights and extend health care coverage to people who don't have it—these big challenges that we can meet.

But if I had one wish—if somebody said to me, "Well, you don't have another year. I'm sorry, you have to go tomorrow, but we'll let you be the genie, and you can have one wish." I would wish to make America truly one America. Because if you look at what is bedeviling the world today—and this is

where you come in—isn't it interesting that as you think about the future—somebody sent me an article today on the future of the Internet and how it wouldn't be long before everybody would be connected to the Internet without needing a personal computer. We'll have these little pads that a lot of you already have, and you'll get it on your telephone; you'll get it in your television; everybody will know everything and all the time. It will be unbelievable.

We are unraveling the mysteries of the human genome. We're about to discover what is in those black holes in outer space. I mean, it's unbelievable all this stuff we're going to know. And yet, we are most bedeviled in the world by the oldest problem of human society. We still are kind of afraid of people who are different from us. They're different races, different religions; they're gay, they're this, they're that, the other.

And in America you can see it when a Jewish community center gets shot up, Filipino postman gets murdered, African-American basketball coach gets killed, and then a young Korean Christian gets killed walking out of his church by a guy that just murdered the African-American basketball coach. James Byrd gets dragged to death in Texas; Matthew Shepard gets stretched over a rack in Wyoming. These things happen. Why? Because if you are afraid of people who are different from you, it's a short step to hating them. Then it's a short step to dehumanizing them. Then it's a short step to justifying violence. And all around the world what has bedeviled the world? Ireland, the Middle East, the Balkans, Bosnia and Kosovo, the African tribal wars. It's just fascinating to me that we're on the verge of a new millennium with all this modern stuff out there, but our biggest problem is the oldest problem of human society.

So the reason it's important that you understand that your vote is your voice, is that you help to guarantee every time you empower people that their voices will be heard and that we will somehow understand that we're not just supposed to tolerate each other; we're supposed to celebrate our differences. Not tolerate—that's not good enough—celebrate our differences, not because they are the most important thing

about us, but because they make life more interesting without letting us forget our common humanity.

And that is the only thing that makes democracy the best of all systems of government. If everybody participates, you have a high chance that we come to the right conclusion. And it is profoundly important. I just was thinking, I'm so grateful that we have made these huge steps forward in the Irish peace process. I'm very grateful for the progress we are making in the Middle East.

I was just in Kosovo with all those schoolchildren that got to go home because the United States and our NATO Allies stuck up for them and said they couldn't be wiped out just because of their religion or their ethnic background. But I know that if we want to continue to do good around the world, we have to be good at home. This Irish agreement, it's wonderful. How many people died to get there? And the Middle East, we've got a lot of hard decisions to make, but they're not hard when compared with the alternative.

And so I say to all of you, we have a chance to escape that and to meet these huge challenges when we've got more resources and more confidence and more evidence that we can make progress than any time in my lifetime. But we can only do it if we do it together.

You know, I just came from this gun violence group meeting. And I told them that the big fight we had over the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban, all these things, they really were sort of whole different views of the world about what is the nature of freedom, what is the nature of society, what is the nature of our responsibilities to one another. You know, to me, I came from a hunting culture, but it was a no-brainer to me that we ought to be for the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban, because I thought that a modest amount of inconvenience on the part of 95 or 99 percent of the people to find the 1 percent of the people who had no business with assault weapons, had no business with handguns, who were criminals, had other problems in their background. To me, that made me more free, not less free, because I think mutuality is important, the media. And you believed that.

And there is no group of Americans that has a bigger stake in our getting this right than Hispanic-Americans, the fastest growing minority, people who have known all the prejudice and all the promise of America, both, people who now are setting all kinds of records in new business growth and achievements in every area of our national life, but because we still have such a large group of first-generation immigrants, also have the highest high school dropout rates, the highest education problems.

Listen, we can get all this right—we can get all this right—if everybody has a voice that is heard. That is why what you are doing is so profoundly important.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 p.m. at the Grand Havana Room. In his remarks, he referred to State Assembly Speaker Antonio R. Villarraigosa; Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina; and Lydia Camarillo, executive director, Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project.

Letter to Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen on the Review of Space Launch Failures

November 29, 1999

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Thank you for conducting and reporting on your thorough and in-depth review of the U.S. space launch failures that occurred in 1998 and 1999. I am pleased to know that you have identified the root causes behind each of the recent launch failures and that you have worked with NASA, the Intelligence Community, and industry to take corrective actions to prevent recurrences. I also appreciate your efforts, and the efforts of industry, in uncovering and addressing the broader systemic concerns that may have contributed to this series of failures.

I have asked Dr. Neal Lane, my Assistant for Science and Technology, and Mr. Sandy Berger, my Assistant for National Security Affairs, to review your report. Now and in the next century, our national security, civil, and commercial space sectors will continue to depend on reliable access to space to

achieve our broader national goals. Your report correctly points out the importance of successfully flying the remaining current fleet of expendable launch vehicles already on contract, with missions valued at more than \$20 billion, while assuring mission success during the transition from these current systems to the modernized Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicles.

Thank you again for the hard work and dedication of the government-industry team in uncovering the technical and management problems associated with these launch failures. Please implement appropriate actions to correct the causes of the failures and ensure our nation's ability to reliably access space in the future.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This item was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 1. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Proclamation 7257—National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month, 1999

November 30, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Drivers who operate motor vehicles while under the influence of alcohol or drugs are one of our Nation's greatest public safety risks; those drivers take advantage of the privilege of driving without assuming the corresponding responsibility of driving safely. In 1996 alone, more than 46 million Americans drove their cars within 2 hours of using drugs, alcohol, or both, causing death or injury to themselves and thousands of others each year.

Thanks to the grassroots activism of organizations such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving, greater public awareness of the dangers of impaired driving, and stronger laws and stricter enforcement, we have made progress in our efforts to keep drunk and drugged drivers off the road and reduce alcohol-related fatalities. Last year, the number of people killed in alcohol-related crashes

reached a record low, and the number of young people killed in such accidents fell to the lowest rate ever recorded. But as anyone who has lost a loved one to an alcohol-related crash will attest, one impaired driver on the road is one too many.

That is why safety continues to be my Administration's top transportation priority, and that is why we remain committed to eliminating drunk and drugged driving. Because research shows that the risk of a fatal car crash significantly increases when a driver's blood alcohol content (BAC) exceeds .08, I continue to challenge the Congress to enact a tough national standard of impaired driving at .08 BAC. In support of this goal, last July Vice President Gore announced incentive grants totaling \$57 million to 17 States and the District of Columbia for lowering the legal threshold for drunk driving to .08 BAC. These grants make up part of the more than \$500 million in Federal grants authorized under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, which I signed into law June 9, 1998, to offer States incentives to enact and enforce laws that make driving with .08 BAC or greater a drunk driving offense.

I am pleased that today, thanks to legislation I signed in 1995, every State in our Nation and the District of Columbia has enacted zero tolerance laws for underage drinking and driving. I urge leaders and policymakers at the State and local level to continue to focus resources and public attention on drunk- and drugged-driving prevention and enforcement programs. Using these three powerful tools—increased public awareness, stronger laws, and tougher enforcement—we can make our neighborhoods and highways safer and continue to reduce deaths and injuries.

In memory of the thousands of people who have lost their lives to alcohol- and drug-impaired driving, I ask that all motorists participate once again this year in a "National Lights on for Life Day." By driving with car headlights illuminated on Friday, December 17, 1999, we will underscore the profound responsibility each of us has to drive free from the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by

the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim December 1999 as National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month. I urge all Americans to recognize the dangers of impaired driving, to take responsibility for themselves and others around them, to prevent anyone under the influence of alcohol or drugs from getting behind the wheel, and to help teach our young people about the importance of safe driving.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:59 a.m., December 3, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 1, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on December 6.

Telephone Interview With Michael Paulson of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer From San Francisco, California

November 30, 1999

The President. How are you?

Mr. Paulson. I'm good. How are you doing?

The President. I'm great. I'm going to the San Francisco Airport, on my way to L.A. and then to Seattle.

Disruption of the Seattle Round

Mr. Paulson. Excellent. So as far as you know, are there still talks taking place? We just heard on CNN, claiming that the talks are actually canceled, which—we don't even know if that's true.

The President. Well, that's certainly news to me. I heard that the talks were still going on.

Mr. Paulson. Tell me—I'm sure you've heard it's been kind of a chaotic day here. Do you regret choosing Seattle as the location for this? Do you wish you were heading

some place sunny, like Honolulu and San Diego?

The President. Well, I don't think the—I think certainly if we had had it any place in the continental United States, we would have had the same thing. And even if we had gone to Honolulu, there might have been thousands of people there.

What I regret is not that there are protesters there. I have supported the right of people whose interests represent labor union, who represent environmental groups, people who represent the poorer countries of the world coming and expressing their opinions. And I've repeatedly said I thought the WTO process was too closed. It ought to be opened up, and labor and environmental interests ought to be represented, and it ought to be fair for poor countries as well as wealthy countries. What I regret is that a small number of people have done non-peaceful things and have tried to block access and to prevent meetings. That's wrong. It's not only illegal; it's just wrong.

On the other hand, I think the larger number of people that are there, for peaceful purposes, are healthy. I think what they represent is that in the last 5 years you've seen a dramatic change. Trade is now no longer the province of CEO's, organized interest groups that deal with the economy, and political leaders. It's now—we not only live in a global economy. You've got a global information society, and this whole process is being democratized. And we're going to have to build a new consensus that goes down deeper into every society about what kind of trade policy we want. And I think that is, on balance, a healthy thing.

Anyway, that's kind of where I am on it. I regret very much that a few people have given the protesters a bad name, because I think the fact that the protesters are there—were it not for those stopping meetings, stopping movements, not being peaceful—would be a positive.

Protesters and the World Trade Organization

Mr. Paulson. Right. What is your theory about why people are so upset here?

The President. Well, for one thing, I think that a lot of people feel threatened by all

these changes that are going on in the global economy and the process by which the decisions are made—changing the rules of trade—are made by people who generally have not been very accountable. I mean, the whole WTO—I went to Geneva last year to tell them they ought to open their records.

Mr. Paulson. Right.

The President. I mean, they have secret proceedings and things of that kind.

For another thing, a lot of times when decisions have been made, they aren't honored. The United States won 22 out of 24 cases we filed, and in several cases the people say, "Well, so what?"

And then I think, finally, there are people who question whether these trading rules are benefiting lower income countries, poor countries, and who question whether they're a damage to the environment from certain trading arrangements that wouldn't otherwise be there, and who question whether this is a race to the bottom or the top—so that labor unions in wealthier countries want to have certain basic, core labor standards observed in poorer countries because they think it will be better for average people, so that the trading system actually benefits them. So I think that is bringing all those people out.

Goals of the Seattle Round

Mr. Paulson. What in your mind will make this week a success or a failure?

The President. Well, I think if we can continue to negotiate and can reach some accord on the terms under which to start a new trade round and if I can persuade more of my colleagues that if you don't want people like the protesters outside of every trade meeting from now until the end of time, they're going to have to open the process so that the voices of labor, the environment, and the developing countries can be heard and so that the decisions are transparent, the records are open, and the consequences are clear, we're going to continue to have problems.

And I think, on balance, the world is much better off because we've expanded trade over the last 50 years. And I bet you a lot of the protesters came to the protest wearing shoes that were made in other countries, using cell

phones, and maybe a lot of them drove cars that were made—

Mr. Paulson. Right.

The President. —or foreign manufactured. We live in a global economy that on balance has been quite good for the United States, but also good for developing countries. But we've got to make a better case down deeper into society. It's not just trying to convince a few elites in every society that the system of integrated trade on fair and open terms is good for them.

Labor Issues, Trade Sanctions, and the WTO

Mr. Paulson. Let me ask you about labor, which, you know, is a big issue here. What is your position on allowing trade sanctions against countries that violate core labor standards?

The President. I think what we ought to do, first of all, is to adopt the United States position on having a working group on labor within the WTO. And then that working group should develop these core labor standards, and then they ought to be a part of every trade agreement. And ultimately, I would favor a system in which sanctions would come for violating any provision of a trade agreement. But we've got to do this in steps.

I do think it is worth noting that the strongest opposition to this position, however, come from the leaders of developing countries, including a lot of developing countries that have leftwing governments, not rightwing governments, who believe that this is a strategy by the American labor movement to keep them down and keep them poor and keep them from selling products that they would otherwise be highly competitive in, in the American market.

Mr. Paulson. Right. Are they right?

The President. Well, I don't think so. That is, it certainly could be used that way. But what the American labor movement has a right, it seems to me, to is to know that their brothers and sisters throughout the world are actually going to be benefiting from expanded trade.

When I ran for President, there were some countries, small countries in the Caribbean where we had dramatically expanded trade

in the years before I became President, where average hourly wages had fallen during the time trade had expanded and the incomes of the countries had gone up. That's not right.

So I wouldn't support labor's objectives if I thought they were just purely protectionist and they didn't want Americans to compete with people from other places, because we can compete quite well. And for every job we've lost in America, we've gained two or three more. That's why we've got 19.8 million jobs in the last 7 years. We never had job growth like this before. And the trade-related jobs pay higher wages. So if I thought the labor agenda was purely protectionist, I wouldn't be for that.

On the other hand, I think it is legitimate to say that if people are out there working and selling their projects in the international arena and Americans are going to buy them and Europeans are going to buy them—all of us who come from wealthy countries where most people have the basic necessities of life—we ought not to buy from countries that violate the child labor norms; we ought not to buy from countries that basically oppress their workers with labor conditions and lack of a living income. And there is a way to strike the right balance here so that we put a more human face on the global economy.

I feel the same way about environmental standards.

Sovereignty, Environmental Issues, and the WTO

Mr. Paulson. That's the subject I want to ask you about next. As you know, critics are pointing at cases like the shrimp-turtle dispute and saying that corporate lawyers, meeting in secret, can invalidate U.S. laws. Are we yielding some of our sovereignty in being part of the WTO?

The President. Well, we yield the right to be unilateral and not bound by a system of rules every time we join any kind of organization. I mean, if you join any kind of organization in which there are going to be disputes, you can't say that "I'll only follow the rules when we win."

Mr. Paulson. Right.

The President. And you can't say that any organization made up of human beings will be error-free. But I know there was a lot of concern about the way the turtle case was handled. There is also—earlier the Venezuelan oil——

Mr. Paulson. Right.

The President. —where we had a lot of concerns. But I think the answer to that is to make sure that these environmental standards are properly integrated into the WTO deliberation and that we agree that countries ought to have more leeway on higher environmental standards than in other areas.

And again, some people in the developing countries may say, well, that's a protectionist strategy. But from my point of view, it is not at all. I think that with climate change being the number one environmental problem in the world, it is a mistake not to take into account the environmental consequences, to not only a particular nation but to the climate as a whole, to anything that leads to accelerated deforestation or the increase in greenhouse gas emission.

But see, I've got a whole different take on this than most people do. I believe that one of the biggest economic as well as environmental problems the world has today is that most decisionmakers, not only in the United States but in all the developing countries, still believe the only way to get rich is the way the U.S. and Europe got rich in the industrial era, by burning more coal, burning more oil, putting more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. And then countries say, "When we get as rich as they are, then we'll turn around and clean it up." But as you know, with climate change, it doesn't work that way. If you warm the climate—you put all this stuff into the air—it takes between 50 and 100 years to turn a lot of this around.

But we know now that it is technologically possible to grow the economy and reduce greenhouse gas emission, if you're a rich country, and stabilize them, if you're a poor country, by taking a totally different energy course into the future. The technologies are available right now. And that's what I think we have to sell people on. And then we've

got to really work hard to get these technologies widely disseminated into the developing economies, so that India, China, these other places can use them to create jobs and raise income while they protect their environment. That's a sale we've got to make. And it ought to be part of the decisionmaking process of the WTO to promote that policy.

U.S. Goals in the Seattle Round

Mr. Paulson. Let me ask you one last question. What is the U.S. willing to give up at these talks? I mean, these are negotiations, and other countries would like to talk about our antidumping laws. What can we put on the table?

The President. Well, first of all, I think we ought to support the general rules that reduce tariffs and other trade barriers. And we ought to be for accelerating access to our market, for countries that follow responsible policies. That's at the heart of my Caribbean Basin Initiative and my Africa trade bill, and I have reached out to those countries to try to do that. And we ought to do that.

But I would not be for giving up our dumping laws, and I'll tell you why: because we already have the most open markets in the world. We have—when the Asian economy collapsed in '97, we could have closed our markets, and we didn't. And so it exploded our trade deficit. Our trade deficit is about 4 percent of our income now.

I'm for open borders because we get more products at lower cost, and it's a great pressure against inflation coming back into our economy. And we still have created almost 20 million jobs. But I don't think it's right to allow a temporary economic emergency to lead to a surge of steel dumping, for example, like we went through, and then to throw a lot of Americans out of business in capital-intensive industries who might not be able to get back into business, just because of an economic crisis somewhere else and because nobody else will take the products. I mean, for the Europeans to tell us we should stop dumping, when during the Asian crisis we bought literally 10 times as much foreign steel as they did, is a little ludicrous—when they have absolute quotas on the number of

foreign cars they will buy, that we don't have—is ludicrous.

So we can't give up our dumping laws as long as we have the most open markets in the world, and we keep them open to help these countries keep going, and other countries don't do the same. They shouldn't be able to take advantage of temporary economic developments to do something that otherwise the free market economy wouldn't support.

If you look at what our steel industry did, they shed over half of their employment; they spent billions of dollars modernizing technology. They were, under normal circumstances, internationally competitive. They should not have been put out of business by people dumping from Japan, from Russia, from any other country during the period of crisis that we just went through.

Disruption of the Seattle Round

Mr. Paulson. Okay. So as far as you know, the talks are still on, right? You haven't learned anything—

The President. Yes. While we've been talking, as far as I know, they're still on. And I think they ought to stay on. And I think, again, if we can just get by the few people that are being—that aren't being peaceful and the people that are trying to stop people from meeting, I think the presence of others with legitimate questions about the WTO process, the environment and labor and how poor countries are treated, I think this can be a net positive because we're going to have to build a much deeper consensus for global trade to carry it forward.

Mr. Paulson. Okay. We'll see you tomorrow.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 4:50 p.m. from the Presidential motorcade en route to San Francisco International Airport. The transcript of this interview was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 1. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

**Remarks to the Washington State
Trade Community in Seattle,
Washington**

December 1, 1999

Thank you very much. Good afternoon. John, thank you for your introduction, and thank you for your example. I want to say a little more in a minute about the points that you made, but I thank you for being here.

Thank you very much, Patricia Davis. And I'd also like to thank the other people from the port here and the American Presidents Line who gave me a tour earlier of the port and how it works, with the rail and the trucking systems of this area. I thank you, Secretary Glickman and Secretary Slater, who's also here, for your support of trade; and Senator Murray, who had to go give another speech; Congressman McDermott, Congressman Inslee, from here in Washington.

We have a very large delegation from Congress. I'd like to ask all the Members of Congress who are here to please stand, so you'll see what the level of interest is. We have Representatives from the House and the Senate, from the Republican and the Democratic Parties here. And we're very glad to be in Washington State, Governor Locke, and in Seattle, Mayor Schell. We thank you for hosting us.

I thank all the other farmers who are here. And I'd like to say a special word of welcome to the children who are here, who are part of the WTO Trade Winds program.

Last year, Seattle sold \$34 billion in exports to foreign markets, making it the largest exporter among all American cities, everything from airplanes to apples. The control tower I just climbed, therefore, offers an interesting vantage point, not only of what was once a condemned toxic waste site and is now a wonderful, flourishing economic asset but, in a larger sense, a vantage point of the 21st century world that I think we ought to be building for our children.

It's a perfect place to talk about what we came here to the WTO meeting in Seattle to do, to open markets and expand opportunities, not only for our people but for people all around the world, from the world's newest business, E-commerce, to the world's oldest

business, farming. We came to talk about trade and to talk about trade in the context of an increasingly globalized society.

Now, I want to say just a few words about all the rather interesting hoopla that's been going on here. We need to start and ask ourselves some basic questions: Do you believe that on balance, over the last 50 years, the United States has benefited from world trade? I do.

There wouldn't be nearly as many family farmers left in America as there are today, with all the mechanization and the modernization, if we hadn't been able to sell our products around the world, because we can produce more at higher quality and lower cost than any other country in the world in so many products. Today we have about 4 percent of the world's people. We enjoy about 22 percent of the world's income. It is pretty much elemental math that we can't continue to do that unless we sell something to the other 96 percent of the people that inhabit this increasingly interconnected planet of ours.

Now, if you look at where the farmers in our country are today—whether they're row crop farmers like most of them in my home State of Arkansas, growing soybeans and rice and cotton and wheat or people who grow fruit in Washington State or vegetables here and on the east coast—one of the biggest problems we've got is low prices because of the Asian financial crisis. And it's been a terrible burden. In addition to low prices, many of our farmers have been victimized by terrible, terrible weather problems. And finally, they deal with market after market after market where they could sell even more than they do if the markets were more open.

I personally believe, for the farmers that are in our national farm programs, we're going to have to adjust our national laws if we are going to stop having an annual appropriation of the surplus that's as big as what we've been doing the last couple of years. But over and above that, for the farmers, like the people that run our apple orchards that aren't in the farm programs, we've got to keep fighting to open these markets.

Now, we do that against a background of people who are raising more and more questions about the global trading system and about the process of globalization in general.

When I see all these people in the streets here, I'd like to point out that among—a lot of people who are peacefully protesting here in the best American tradition, are protesting in part because the interests they represent have never been allowed inside the deliberations of the world trading system. And I went all the way to Geneva last year to talk to the WTO to tell them we had to change that; we needed to open this system up.

For most of the last 50 years, trading issues, when they were finally decided, were the private province of CEO's, trade ministers, and the politicians who supported them. Now we know we have to continue to open markets, we're reaching out to places like China. We're trying to do more with developing nations. We're trying to build more partnerships with governments and industry and labor and management. But we can't do any of it unless there is a broader consensus on trade that reaches deep into our country and to other countries.

So I say that for those who came here to peacefully make their point, I welcome them here because I want them to be integrated into the longer term debate. To those who came here to break windows and hurt small businesses or stop people from going to meetings or having their say, I condemn them, and I'm sorry that the mayor and the Governor and the police officers and others have had to go through this. But we need to make a clear distinction between that which we condemn and that which we welcome.

I'm convinced we do have to open the WTO and the world trading system to greater public scrutiny and to greater public participation. Because unless real people, like this apple farmer from Washington, can say, "This is how I fit in the global economy. This is why my family and I are better off than we otherwise would be," over the long run we're not going to be able to continue to bring the world together, which I think is important to America economically, and I think it is very important politically that we continue to work closely with countries and

encourage them to follow good rules of law and adopt good economic policies and to be good neighbors and not hostile neighbors.

There are a lot of opinions being expressed here among a lot of the folks that are out in the streets, and representatives of groups that I will meet with later today, that I do not agree with. But I am glad that there is such intense interest in this meeting, because it shows that people really do care about this now, and therefore, trade decisions, like other decisions we make in the Congress and in Washington and in the statehouses around the country, have to become part of the democratic process.

You know, every elected official here will tell you that there are some decisions that you really have to consult heavily with the people you represent before you make, and other decisions you know they've just sort of given you a contract on. They say, "Oh, well"—the people in North Dakota—"I know Congressman Pomeroy or Senator Conrad, and I don't understand that issue very much, but whatever decision they make is okay with me because I trust them."

And it's not that way any more here with trade. We have to bring people into this tent, and we have to do it in an effective way. But I think, at least for people like me—and I haven't even succeeded in bringing harmony, I know, within my own party about this—but I do not see how we can have the country and the future we want unless America continues to be a leading force for expanding trade, expanding markets for goods and services, expanding the reach of international commerce, doing it on fair and decent terms, being sensitive to the burdens that the poorest countries have, and understanding that, while a concern for labor or the environment could be twisted to be an excuse for protectionism, it is not wrong for the United States to say we don't believe in child labor or forced labor or the oppression of our brothers and sisters who work for a living around the world. And we don't believe that growing the economy requires us to undermine the environment.

You know, you just look at this port here. What they're doing with multimodal transportation here is saving huge amounts of energy, dramatically reducing greenhouse gas

emissions, as it promotes economic growth. You're going to see the growth, in my opinion, in the next several years of alternative fuels, much of it coming out of America's farming areas, which will dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce global warming, and accelerate economic growth. So I strongly believe, if we want to get everybody together and move forward, we are going to have to listen to people who have legitimate economic concerns, legitimate environmental concerns, legitimate labor concerns.

So one of the things that I think we've got to be clear on—everybody has to decide—do you think we are better off or worse off with an increasingly integrated global economy where productive Americans have a chance to sell their goods and services and skills around the world. I think we're better off. That's the number one core decision we ought to make up our mind as a country we agree about.

Now, I want this new trade round at the WTO to be about jobs, development, and broadly shared prosperity and about improving the quality of life and work for ordinary people all around the world. It isn't right for me to ask for the good things I want for America's working families without wanting to provide those opportunities for others who are willing to work for them.

The impact of this round could be quite profound. Since the first trade round 50 years ago, we've cut major nations' tariffs on manufactured goods by 90 percent. During the same period, global trade has grown fifteen-fold, and we've seen the most rapid, sustained economic growth, not just in the United States but throughout the world, in any period of human history because we're working together.

Are there difficulties? Are there problems? Are there disagreements? Of course, and there always will be. That's why you have to have some system to resolve them. Whatever system you adopt, will there always be a mistake made by somebody, somewhere, sometime? Of course. We're all human.

But we need to keep our eyes on the objective and increasing economic cooperation is in the interest of the ordinary citizens of the United States and the rest of the world. If

we expand access and we do it on fair terms and we're sensitive to the legitimate difficulties these poor countries face, we can also advance the cause of the environment and labor conditions without it becoming a shield for protectionism and trying to take unfair advantage of countries that are poorer than we are. I believe that.

But again, let's keep our eyes on the big issue: We cannot grow the American economy in the 21st century unless we continue to sell more to a world that is prospering and that is more connected, increasingly, in information technology and travel, not only with us but with everyone else in the world.

The typical American—let's just take apples, for example—the typical American eats 20 pounds of fresh apples each year. And this is a pander to Washington State, I am not the typical American; I eat more. [*Laughter*] This is a pander, I admit. But the typical European consumes about 46 pounds of apples a year. So America exported \$353 million worth of apples last year. More than a quarter of the total, 46,000 metric tons, were shipped here, from Seattle—Red Delicious from the Lake Chelan region; Granny Smiths from the Columbia basin; Winesaps, Fujis, Galas grown in Washington State, boxed and bound for Mexico, Malaysia, and more than 40 other countries around the world.

I have worked very hard to open these markets. We opened the Japanese market for the first time to Washington State's apples in our administration. Then we fought to get the barriers down in Washington, in Mexico and elsewhere. And we're making some progress.

But it is very important to recognize—go back to John, or go back to—those of us who come from farming States. Farmers are the lifeblood of our country. They are better at what they do, thank goodness, than any group of people on Earth. But we cannot preserve family farms unless we sell more of what we grow to more people around the world, because the structure of agriculture we have, to make a living, has to produce a lot more food than all of us can consume.

And that is a good thing. That can be a gift to the rest of the world. It can free other countries to work on what they need to do to develop the capacities of their people, to

focus on diversifying their own economies. And we have to find a way to reach agreements to do that.

Five years ago we joined with our trading partners to put agriculture on the WTO agenda. We made some progress then; we pledged to come back and do more. Today, our agenda here is to fight and win for the family farmers of the United States. We want to level the playing field. We don't want any special preferences. We just want agriculture to be treated as fairly as any other sector in the global economy.

I know that's long overdue, and I believe it is the due of every farm family in America, whether an apple farmer in the Cascades, a banana farmer in the Cameroon, any farmer deserves a chance to compete. It is not just American farmers that would be benefited from this. Some of the poorest countries in the world would get the biggest benefits out of this trade round if we continue to tear down barriers to agricultural exports. They shouldn't have to compete against state-owned enterprises, restrictive regulations, the size of other countries' Government grants.

In the European Union, for example, which accounts for 85 percent of the world's agricultural export subsidies, half of the overall budget is spent on agriculture. Now, I appreciate their support for their rural communities. We've always wanted to support our rural communities. But we have to work out a system going forward where everybody can do what they do best. And then people have to be given time and support and investment to make the transitions into the new economy. That's all I'm asking for, and that's all I would ever ask for, for people here in the United States.

We have to lower tariff barriers; they're too high. On average, official rates abroad are 5 times as high as they are here in America. Taking apples as an example, it was just mentioned tariff rates are 45 percent in Korea and 30 percent in China. One of the reasons that our people in our economic team, Charlene Barshefsky and her group and Gene Sperling when they went to China, they negotiated a steep cut in the tariff in China to 10 percent by the year 2004. That's

more apple sales from Washington. It will help more family farmers.

We will also work to reduce domestic supports that don't support trade, so much as distort it by paying farmers to overproduce and drive prices down, and we see that in a lot of places in the world. That should not be the case. We know that our farms can produce a vast and varied supply of food at affordable prices in a way that helps to reduce hunger and malnutrition around the world. We also should see that the promise of biotechnology is realized by consumers as well as producers in the environment, ensuring that the safety of our food is guaranteed by science-based and absolutely open domestic regulations. And we should maintain market access based on sound science.

I want to say to the people of Europe and all around the world, I would never knowingly permit a single pound of any American food product to leave this country if I had a shred of evidence that it was unsafe and neither would any farmer in the United States of America. I say to people around the world, we eat this food, too, and we eat more of it than you do. Now, if there's something wrong with anything we do, we want to know about it first. But we need to handle this in an open, honest way.

It shouldn't be just about politics and emotionalism and short-term advantage. We need an open system. There is a reason we have confidence in the Federal bodies that analyze the safety of our food. They may not be perfect, but nobody believes they are in anybody's hip pocket. They are the world's best experts. We have an orderly, disciplined system here for evaluating the safety of not only our food but our medicine. And we ask all of our trading partners to do the same and to deal with us in a straightforward manner about this.

But everybody must understand we have nothing to hide, and we are eating this food, too. Nobody is trying to do anything under the table, in secret, in an inappropriate way. But neither should our farmers be subject to unrealistic delays and unfair discrimination based on suspicion unsupported by the latest scientific examination. Let's handle this in an open, fair, scientific way. That's the right way to do this.

Now after I leave you, I am going to go meet with the trade ministers that are here from more than 100 countries. It's a great honor for Seattle, for the State of Washington, and for the United States to have these people come here and to try to come to terms with a lot of these very difficult issues. I want to talk about how we can make sure that ordinary working people all across the world feel that they have a stake in an improving global economic system. I want to assure them that we have to do what is necessary to make sure that economic competition lifts people up everywhere.

Now there are people, again I say, who honestly believe that open trade stacks the deck against ordinary people. Thirty percent of the growth we've gotten in this country, 30 percent, between 1993 and the time of the Asian financial crisis, came because of expanding trade. We had pretty good farm years in there too, folks. It's hard to remember it's been so bad the last year or so, but we had some pretty good years.

And we have got to figure out a way not only to sell the idea but to make it real, that we can continue to pursue these objectives in a way that lifts people's quality of life up and lifts the ordinary living standards up for people throughout the world. We can do that.

Now let me finally say that I know these questions won't be easy. One of the things I've learned in all trade cases is that it once again reaffirms the wisdom of the Italian Renaissance political philosopher Machiavelli, who said—I'm paraphrasing here, but this is almost exactly right—he said there is nothing so difficult in all of human affairs as to change the established order of things, because the people that are going to win will always be somewhat uncertain of their gain; whereas, the people who will lose are absolutely sure of what they are going to lose.

So this will require some amount of imagination and trust and humility and flexibility. But if we're going to have a world, rule-based trading system, then we have got to make it work for ordinary folks. But we in America, we have to take the lead in continuing to make the main point. The world is a better place today after 50 years of more open trade than it would have been if we hadn't had

it. Americans are better off today after 50 years of open trade than they would have been if we hadn't had it.

And what has helped us will help the poorest countries in the world, the wealthy countries, and the countries in-between if we find a way to continue to draw together and to deal with the legitimate concerns of the legitimate protesters in the streets of Seattle.

And you know, to me it is a very exciting time. This is a high-class problem, and we ought to treat it as a 21st century challenge, worth our best efforts. If we do, I think we'll get a good result.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:37 p.m. in the Weyerhaeuser Facility at Terminal 5 at the Port of Seattle. In his remarks, he referred to John Butler, apple grower, who introduced the President; Patricia Davis, president, Seattle Port Commission, and president, Washington Council on International Trade; Gov. Gary Locke of Washington; and Mayor Paul Schell of Seattle.

Exchange With Reporters in Seattle

December 1, 1999

Disruption of the Seattle Round

Q. Mr. President, what message do the violence and protests send to the WTO officials and delegates here?

The President. Let me say this, I think that the WTO officials are quite well aware that the violence is not representative of how the American people feel, that nearly 100 percent of our people abhor what was done and condemn it. We don't believe in violence. We don't believe in people who keep other people from meeting. We don't like that.

I think that what the WTO people are here is to pay attention to the nonviolent protests and should open the process and find a way to legitimately consider the grievances of the poorest nations, as well as those of us who believe that we have to give greater concern to the environment and to labor standards and our trade measures. And I think—that's what I think they should listen to. They should give no consideration to the violent

people because nobody supports them, nobody believes in it, and what they did was wrong. It was just vandalism.

Q. Can a peaceful message go through?

The President. I hope so. That's more up to you, than me. [*Laughter*]

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:07 p.m. while the President greeted the crowd at the ropeline following his remarks at the Port of Seattle. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at a World Trade Organization Luncheon in Seattle

December 1, 1999

Thank you very much. Ambassador Barshefsky, thank you for your remarks and your work. Ladies and gentlemen, we have a very large delegation from our administration here today, and I hope it's evidence to you of our seriousness of purpose. I thank the Commerce Secretary, Bill Daley; the Agriculture Secretary, Dan Glickman; our SBA Administrator, Aida Alvarez; my National Economic Councilor, Gene Sperling; Ambassador Esserman; and my Chief of Staff, John Podesta, all of whom are here, and I thank them.

I want to say that I agree that Mike Moore is the ideal person to head the WTO, because he has a sense of humor, and boy, do we need it right now. [*Laughter*] Did you see the gentleman holding up the big white napkin here before we started? He was doing that to get the light for the television cameras. But he was standing here holding the napkin and Mike whispered to me, he said, "Well, after yesterday, that could be the flag of the WTO." [*Laughter*] We'll have rolling laughter as the translation gets through here.

Let me begin by saying welcome to the United States and to one of our most wonderful cities. We are honored to have you here on a very important mission. Today I want to talk a little bit about the work that we're all here to do: launching a new WTO round for a new century, a new type of round that I hope will be about jobs, development, and broadly shared prosperity and about improving the quality of life, as well as the qual-

ity of work around the world, an expanded system of rule-based trade that keeps pace with the changing global economy and the changing global society.

Let me begin by saying that 7 years ago when I had the honor to become President of the United States, I sat down alone and sort of made a list of the things that I hoped could be done to create the kind of world that I wanted our children to live in, in the new century, a world where the interests of the United States I thought were quite clear: in peace and stability; in democracy and prosperity.

To achieve that kind of world, I thought it was very important that the United States support the increasing unity of Europe and the expansion of the European Union; that we support the expansion of NATO and its partnership with what are now more than two dozen countries, including Russia and Ukraine; that we support the integration of China, Russia, and the Indian subcontinent, in particular, into the large political and economic flows of our time; that we stand against the ethnic and religious conflicts that were still consuming the Middle East and Northern Ireland, then Bosnia and later Kosovo; that we do what we could to help people all over the world to deal with such things, including the tribal wars in Africa.

And I thought it was important that we give people mechanisms by which they could work toward a shared prosperity, which is why we wanted to finish the last WTO round; why we are working hard with our friends in Europe on a Stability Pact for the Balkans; why we know economics must be a big part of the Middle East peace process; why we have an Asian-Pacific Economic Forum, where the leaders meet; why we've had two Summits of the Americas with our friends in Latin America; why we're trying to pass the Africa and Caribbean Basin trade initiatives; and why I believe it is imperative that we here succeed in launching a new trade round that can command broad support among ordinary citizens in all our countries and take us where we want to go.

There are negative forces I have tried to combat, in addition to the forces of hatred based on ethnic or religious difference: the

terrorists, the problems of disease and poverty, which I hope that the large debt relief initiative that we are pushing will help to alleviate.

But in the end, all of these changes in my view will only give us the world we want—where the poorest countries have children that can at least live through childhood, and where the boys as well as the girls can go to school and then have a chance to make a decent living; where countries with governance problems can work through them; where wealthy countries can continue to prosper but do so in a way that is more responsible to helping those who still have a long way to go economically; and where, together, we can meet our common responsibilities to human needs, to the environment, to the cause of world peace—we will not get that done unless we can prove, for all of our domestic political difficulties and all of our honest differences, we still believe that we can have an interdependent global economy that runs alongside our interdependent international information society.

And we are called upon here to meet against a background of a lot of people coming here to protest. Some of them, I think, have a short memory, or maybe no memory, of what life was like in most of your countries not so very long ago. So let me say again, I condemn the small number who were violent and who tried to prevent you from meeting.

But I'm glad the others showed up, because they represent millions of people who are now asking questions about whether this enterprise in fact will take us all where we want to go. And we ought to welcome their questions and be prepared to give an answer, because if we cannot create an interconnected global economy that is increasing prosperity and genuine opportunity for people everywhere, then all of our political initiatives are going to be less successful. So I ask you to think about that.

When I hear the voices outside the meeting rooms, I disagree with a lot of what they say, but I'm still glad they're here. Why? Because their voices now count in this debate. For 50 years—one of the reasons I said we needed a leader like Mr. Moore, with a sense of humor, because for 50 years global trade,

even though there were always conflicts—you know, the United States and Japan, they're our great friends and allies; we're always arguing about something. But to be fair, it was a conflict that operated within a fairly narrow band. For 50 years, trade decisions were largely the province of trade ministers, heads of government, and business interests. But now, what all those people in the street tell us is that they would also like to be heard. And they're not so sure that this deal is working for them.

Some of them say, well—and by the way, they're kind of like we are; a lot of them are in conflict with each other, right? Because a lot of them say, "Well, this is not a good thing for the developing countries. They haven't benefited as much as they should have, while the wealthy countries have grown wealthier in this information society." Others say, "Well, even if you're growing the economy, you're hurting the environment." And still others say, "Well, companies may be getting rich in some of these poorer countries, but actual working, laboring people are not doing so well." And others have other various and sundry criticisms of what we have done.

I would like to say, first of all, I think we need to do a better job of making the basic case. No one in this room can seriously argue that the world would have been a better place today if our forebears over the last 50 years had not done their work to bring us closer together. Whatever the problems that exist in whatever countries represented here, whatever the legitimacy of any of the criticism against us, this is a stronger, more prosperous world because we have worked to expand the frontiers of cooperation and reduce the barriers to trade among people. And we need to reiterate our conviction that that is true. If we were all out here going on our own, we would not be as well off in the world as we are.

Secondly, at the end of the cold war, I am sure everyone in this room has been struck by the cruel irony that in this most modern of ages, when the Internet tells us everything, as Mr. Moore said, when we are solving all the problems of the human gene and we will soon know what's in the black holes in the universe, it is truly ironic that the biggest problems of human society are

the oldest ones, those rooted in our fear of those who are different from us—different races, different ethnic groups, different tribes, different religions. All over the world, people consumed by differences.

When people are working together for common prosperity in a rule-based system, they have big incentives to lay the differences down and join hands to work together. So if we just make those two points to our critics, I think it's very important: Number one, the world is a better place than it would have been, had we not had the last 50 years of increasing economic cooperation for trade and investment; and number two, the world of the future will be a safer place if we continue to work together in a rule-based system that offers enormous incentives for people to find ways to cooperate and to give up their old hatreds and their impulses to violence and war.

Now having said that, we now have to say: What next? I think we have to acknowledge a responsibility, particularly those of us in the wealthier countries, to make sure that we are working harder to see that the benefits of the global economy are more widely shared among and within countries, that it truly works for ordinary people who are doing the work for the rest of us. I think we also have to make sure that the rules make sense and that we're continuing to make progress, notwithstanding the domestic political difficulties that every country will face. We all benefit when the rules are clear and fair. I think that means we have to cut tariffs further on manufactured goods and set equally ambitious goals for services. I think we should extend our moratorium on E-commerce. I think we should treat agriculture as we treat other sectors of the economy.

But we all have domestic political constraints. Everybody knows that. I think we have to leave this luncheon saying, in spite of that, we're going to find some way to keep moving forward because the world will be a better place, and the world will be a safer place.

Now, let me offer a few observations of what I hope will be done. First, I think we have to do more to ensure that the least developed countries have greater access to

global markets and the technical assistance to make the most of it.

Director-General Moore has dedicated himself and this organization to extending the benefits of trade to the least developed countries and I thank you for that, sir. Here in Seattle, 32 developing nations are moving toward admission to the WTO. EU President Prodi and I have discussed this whole issue, and I have assured him, and I assure you, that the United States is committed to a comprehensive program to help the poorest nations become full partners in the world trading system. This initiative, which we are working on with the EU, Japan, and Canada, would enhance market access for products from the least developed countries consistent with our GSP preference access program and our Africa and Caribbean Basin initiatives, which, I am glad to report, are making good progress through the United States Congress.

Building on our recent collaboration with Senegal, Lesotho, Zambia, Bangladesh, and Nigeria, we would also intensify our efforts to help developing countries build the domestic institutions they need to make the most of trade opportunities and to implement WTO obligations. This afternoon I will meet with heads of international organizations that provide trade-related technical assistance and ask them to help in this effort.

And I will say this. I do believe, after the Uruguay Round, when we set up this system, that we did not pay enough attention to the internal capacity-building in the developing nations that is necessary to really play a part in the global economy. And I am prepared to do my part to rectify that omission.

We also must help these countries avert the health and pollution costs of the industrial age. We have to help them use clean technologies that improve the economy, the environment, and health care at the same time. And I will just give one example.

Today is World AIDS Day. And today the USTR, our Trade Representative, and the Department of Health and Human Services are announcing that they are committed to working together to make sure that our intellectual property policy is flexible enough to respond to legitimate public health crises.

Intellectual property protections are very important to a modern economy, but when

HIV and AIDS epidemics are involved and like serious health care crises, the United States will henceforward implement its health care and trade policies in a manner that ensures that people in the poorest countries won't have to go without medicine they so desperately need. I hope this will help South Africa and many other countries that we are committed to support in this regard.

More generally, this new round should promote sustainable development in places where hunger and poverty still stoke despair. We know countries that have opened their economies to the world have also opened the doors to opportunity and hope for their own people. Where barriers have fallen, by and large, living standards have risen, and democratic institutions have become stronger. We have to spread that more broadly.

So secondly, I want to say what I said at the WTO in Geneva last year. I think it is imperative that the WTO become more open and accessible. While other international organizations have sought and not shied from public participation—when that has happened, public support has grown. If the WTO expects to have public support grow for our endeavors, the public must see and hear and in a very real sense actually join in the deliberations. That's the only way they can know the process is fair and know their concerns were at least considered.

We've made progress since I issued this challenge in Geneva last year, but I believe there's more work to be done from opening the hearing room doors to inviting in a more formal fashion public comment on trade disputes.

Now look, let me just say, I know there's a lot of controversy about this. And as all of you know, I'm about to enter the last year of my Presidency. I will not be around to deal with the aftermath. But I'm telling you, I've been in this business a long time. And in the end, we all serve and function at the sufferance of the people, either with their active support or their silent acquiescence. What they are telling us in the streets here is, this was an issue we used to be silent on. We're not going to be silent on it anymore. We haven't necessarily given up on trade, but we want to be heard.

The sooner the WTO opens up the process and lets people representing those who are outside in, the sooner we will see fewer demonstrations, more constructive debate, and a broader level of support in every country for the direction that every single person in this room knows that we ought to be taking into the 21st century. So we can do it a little bit now and a little bit later. We can drag our feet, or we can run through an open door. But my preference is to open the meetings, open the records, and let people file their opinions.

No one—no sensible person—expects to win every argument, and no one ever does. But in a free society, people want to be heard, and human dignity and political reality demand it today.

Third, as I have said repeatedly, I believe the WTO must make sure that open trade does indeed lift living standards, respects core labor standards that are essential not only to worker rights but to human rights. That's why this year the United States has proposed that the WTO create a working group on trade and labor. To deny the importance of these issues in a global economy is to deny the dignity of work, the belief that honest labor fairly compensated gives meaning and structure to our lives. I hope we can affirm these values at this meeting.

I am pleased that tomorrow I will sign the ILO convention to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. And I thank the United States Senate on a bipartisan basis for supporting us in this. I believe the WTO should collaborate more closely with the ILO, which has worked hard to protect human rights, to ban child labor. I hope you will do this.

Let me say in all candor, I am well aware that a lot of the nations that we most hope to support, the developing nations of the world, have reservations when the United States says we support bringing labor concerns into our trade debate. And I freely acknowledge that, if we had a certain kind of rule, then protectionists in wealthy countries could use things like wage differentials to keep poorer countries down, to say, "Okay, you opened your markets to us. Now we'll sell to you. But you're selling to us, and we want to keep you down, so we'll say you're not paying your people enough."

The answer to that is not to avoid this labor issue, not when there's still child labor all over the world, not when there are still oppressive labor practices all over the world, not when there is still evidence in countries that ordinary people are not benefiting from this. The answer is not to just throw away the issue. The answer is to write the rules in such a way that people in our position, the wealthier countries, can't do that, can't use this as an instrument of protectionism. We can find a way to do this.

But there is a sense of solidarity all over the world, among ordinary people who get up every day, will never be able to come to a luncheon like this, do their work, raise their children, pay their taxes, form the backbone of every nation represented here. They deserve basic, fundamental decency, and the progress of global trade should reflect, also, in their own lives. I do not want the United States, or any other country, now or later, to be able to use this as a shield for protectionism. But to pretend that it is not a legitimate issue in many countries is another form of denial, which I believe will keep the global trading system from building the public support it deserves.

Finally, we must work to protect and to improve the environment as we expand trade. Two weeks ago, I signed an Executive order requiring careful environmental review of our major trading agreements early enough to make a difference, including the input of the public and outside experts and considering genuinely held concerns. We stand ready to cooperate as you develop similar systems, and to integrate the environment more fully into trade policy.

We are committed to finding solutions which are win-win, that benefit both the economy and the environment, open trade and cutting-edge clean technologies, which I believe will be the next industrial revolution. We will continue to support WTO rules that recognize a nation's right to take science-based health, safety, and environmental measures, even when they're higher than international standards.

Now I want to say something about this. Again I know, there are some people who believe my concern and the concern of the United States about the environment is an-

other way that somehow we can keep the developing countries down. That is not true. There are basically two great clusters of environmental issues facing the world today. First, there are the local issues faced primarily by the developing nations: healthy water systems and sewer systems, systems to restrict soil erosion and to otherwise promote the public health.

It is in everyone's interest to help those things to be installed as quickly and efficiently as possible. But the real issue that affects us all, that prompts my insistence that we put this issue on the agenda, is global warming and the related issue of the loss of species in the world as a consequence of global warming.

And the difference in this issue and previous environmental issues is this: Once the greenhouse gases get in the atmosphere, they take a long time, 100 years or more, to disperse. Therefore, one nation's policy, including ours—and we are now the largest emitter of greenhouse gases, in the United States. We won't be long, but we are now. But we have to do something about this. And I want to say to you what I said to the people at our table. There is now clear and compelling scientific, technological evidence that it is no longer necessary for a poor country growing rich to do so by emitting more greenhouse gas emissions. Or in plainer language, a nation can develop a middle class and develop wealth without burning more oil and coal in traditional manners. This is a sea change in the reality that existed just a few years ago.

And let's be candid, most people don't believe it. A lot of people in our country don't believe it. But in everything from transportation to manufacturing to the generation of electricity, to the construction of buildings, it is now possible to grow an economy, with much less injury to the atmosphere, with available technologies. And within 5 years breathtaking changes in the way automobile engines work and in the way fuel is made, especially from biomass, will make these trends even more clear.

I do not believe the United States has the right to ask India or Pakistan or China or any other country to give up economic growth. But I do believe that all of us can responsibly say, if you can grow at the same

rate without doing what we did—that is, fouling the environment and then cleaning it up—Mr. Kono remembers—I remember the first time I went to Tokyo over 20 years ago, people wore masks riding their bicycles around. And now the air there is cleaner than it is in my hometown in Arkansas.

What is the difference now? It is not just a national issue. If you foul the atmosphere and then you later clean it up, the greenhouse gases are still up there, and they'll be there for 100 years, warming the climate.

Now, we do not have a right to ask anybody to give up economic growth. But we do have a right to say, if we're prepared to help you finance a different path to growth, and we can prove to you—and you accept, on the evidence—that your growth will be faster, not smaller, that you'll have more good jobs, more new technology, a broader base for your economy, then I do believe we ought to have those kind of environmental standards. And we ought to do it in a voluntary way with available technologies. But we ought to put environment at the core of our trade concerns.

Now I don't know if I've persuaded any of you about any of this. But I know one thing: this is a better world than it would have been if our forebears hadn't done this for the last 50 years. If we're going to go into the next 50 years, we have to recognize that we're in a very different environment. We're in a total information society, where information has already been globalized, and citizens all over the world have been empowered. And they are knocking on the door here, saying, "Let us in and listen to us. This is not an elite process anymore. This is a process we want to be heard in."

So I implore you, let's continue to make progress on all the issues where clearly we can. Let's open the process, and listen to people even when we don't agree with them. We might learn something, and they'll feel that they've been part of a legitimate process. And let's continue to find ways to prove that the quality of life of ordinary citizens in every country can be lifted, including basic labor standards and an advance on the environmental front.

If we do this, then 50 years from now the people who will be sitting in all these chairs will be able to have the same feelings about you that Mr. Moore articulated our feelings for the World War II generation.

Thank you very much, and welcome again.

NOTE: the President spoke at 3:05 p.m. in the Spanish Room at the Four Seasons Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Ambassador Susan G. Esserman, Deputy U.S. Trade Representative; Mike Moore, Director-General, World Trade Organization; Romano Prodi, President, European Commission; and Minister of Foreign Affairs Yohei Kono of Japan. The President also referred to GSP, the Generalized System of Preferences; and Executive Order 13141 of November 16, 1999 (64 FR 63169). A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Radio Remarks on World AIDS Day

December 1, 1999

Since the beginning of the AIDS pandemic, more than 50 million men, women, and children worldwide have been infected with the HIV virus. Each day, 16,000 more become infected, half of whom are young people under the age of 25.

And while we've made great strides in treating AIDS here at home, there is much more that needs to be done, particularly in the developing world, where AIDS poses our greatest challenge.

Today, on World AIDS Day, and every day, we must join together as a global community to stem the tide of new infection, to care for those who are sick, and to continue our quest for a vaccine and a cure.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 10 a.m. on November 29 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for later broadcast. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 30 but was embargoed for release until 12 noon on December 1. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Executive Order 13143—Amending Executive Order 10173, as Amended, Prescribing Regulations Relating to the Safeguarding of Vessels, Harbors, Ports, and Waterfront Facilities of the United States

December 1, 1999

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including 50 U.S.C. 191, I hereby prescribe the following amendment to the regulations prescribed by Executive Order 10173 of October 18, 1950, as amended, which regulations constitute Part 6, Subchapter A, Chapter I, Title 33 of the Code of Federal Regulations:

Section 6.01–4 is amended to read as follows:

§ 6.01–4 *Waterfront facility*. “Waterfront facility,” as used in this part, means all piers, wharves, docks, or similar structures to which vessels may be secured and naval yards, stations, and installations, including ranges; areas of land, water, or land and water under and in immediate proximity to them; buildings on them or contiguous to them and equipment and materials on or in them.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
December 1, 1999.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:42 a.m., December 3, 1999]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 2, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on December 6.

Remarks on Signing the International Labor Organization Convention on the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Seattle

December 2, 1999

Thank you, Secretary Herman; Mr. Samovia, thank you for your leadership; John Sweeney, Ambassador Tom Niles; all the Members of Congress here; Governor Locke; I would like to begin—I have to make a brief

statement about Ireland, but before I do, just to illustrate the depth of support here, I'd like to ask all the Members of Congress who are here to stand and be recognized, and thank them for their help. Thank you.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Before I make my statement about this important convention, I'd like to say a few words about the truly remarkable and historic events taking place today in Northern Ireland. Eighteen months ago today the Good Friday agreement was signed with the promise of a future of peace and hope. Today the promise is being realized. The people of Northern Ireland now have the power to shape their own destiny and choose their own future. Democratic government by and for all the people of Northern Ireland is now replacing suspicion, fear, and violence. It is now possible to believe that the day of the gun and the bomb are, in fact, over.

There are many leaders who deserve special tribute for their contributions, but I would like to mention especially David Trimble and John Taylor, John Hume and Seamus Mallon, Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, John Alderdice, Monica McWilliams, David Ervine and Gary McMichael and so many others.

I would also like to thank Prime Minister Blair, Prime Minister Ahern, their predecessors, John Major, John Bruton, Albert Reynolds. I thank Sir John de Chastelain for his work. I thank the special envoys to Northern Ireland, Ms. Mowlam and Mr. Mandelson, for the work they have done. And especially I thank our great American leader there, George Mitchell, whose patience, commitment, and conviction were essential to making this day happen.

The Good Friday agreement must continue to be implemented in full, in word and in spirit. The United States must continue and will continue to stand with all those who are unequivocally committed to the pursuit of peace and justice and democracy in Northern Ireland. This is our common responsibility to the children there, whose future is the best reason for all that has been done.

Let me say that the United States is the home of the largest Irish diaspora in the world. Many of us claim Irish heritage. For

all the years and all the bloodshed, to have the promise of being over today, this is an especially meaningful day for Irish-Americans, and I thank you very much.

ILO Child Labor Convention

I'd like to begin this day by thanking all the Members of the Senate. Thank you, Senator Murray, for being here. And I want to thank the Republicans, as well as the Democrats, who voted on this together. But I would be remiss if I did not say that the first person who ever discussed this issue with me in 1992 when we were both running for the office I am privileged to hold was Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa. And for more than 7 years now, at every occasion, he has talked to me about this issue. It has been truly one of the driving passions of his life, and without him we would not be here doing this today. And I would like to ask him to stand.

Thank you, Senator Harkin. Thank you.

I also want to thank Secretary Herman and Gene Sperling and Karen Tramontano for what they did in our administration to spearhead the effort. Perhaps there is no better way to conclude my visit here, because what we celebrate this morning symbolizes in many ways what we're seeking in the launch of a new round of trade talks, not just to lower barriers but to raise living standards, to help ensure that people everywhere feel they have a positive stake in global trade that gives them and their children a chance for a better life.

We are here in Seattle to continue our efforts to help establish a new consensus on international trade that leads to jobs that are secure, development that is sustainable, prosperity that is broadly shared. We seek to widen the circle of opportunity, deepen our commitments to human rights and human freedom, and put a human face on the global economy.

Some day that it is not possible, that the interests of nations, businesses, and labor, within and across national borders, are too divergent. This child labor convention proves that, at least on this profoundly important issue, it is possible. It is a living example of how we can together come to level up global standards and lift up core labor values.

The step we take today affirms fundamental human rights. Ultimately, that's what core labor standards are all about, not an instrument of protectionism or a vehicle to impose one nation's values on another but about our shared values, about the dignity of work, the decency of life, the fragility and importance of childhood.

In my State of the Union Address almost 2 years ago, I asked Congress to help make the United States a world leader in this cause and to start by working to end abusive child labor. We are making good on that effort. Together—again, across party lines—we secured the largest investment in American history to end abusive child labor around the globe.

We're establishing the first-ever United States Government purchasing ban on goods made by forced or indentured child labor, and we've beefed up enforcement to stop the importation of goods made by such labor. Just last week, the Customs Service banned the importation of certain hand-rolled cigarettes, known as bidis, because of evidence that one firm was making them with bonded child labor.

Today we build on our achievements and our common commitment. This convention is truly a victory for labor, for business, and for Government—for all those who worked long and hard for 2 years to reach a consensus; a victory for the nations of the world who joined together in the ILO this summer to adopt this convention on a unanimous vote. Today we say with one clear voice: Abusive child labor is wrong and must end.

Above all, of course, this is a victory for the children of the world, and especially for the tens of millions of them who are still forced to work in conditions that shock the conscience and haunt the soul; children brutalized by the nightmare of prostitution; children indentured to manufacturers working against debt for wages so low they will never be repaid; children who must handle dangerous chemicals or who are forced to sell illegal drugs; children who crawl deep into unsafe mines; children who are forcibly recruited into armed conflicts and then spend the rest of their entire lives bearing the scars of committing murder when they were 8 or 9 or 10 years old.

For the first time, this convention calls on the international community to take immediate and effective steps to stop the worst forms of child labor. This convention enables the world to say, no more. We recognize, of course, that no treaty or convention is enough and that to end abusive child labor once and for all we must untangle the pathology of grinding poverty and hopelessness than lies at its root. If we want to slam the door shut on abusive child labor, we must open the door wide to education and opportunity. After all, nations can only reach their potential when their children can fulfill theirs.

John Sweeney put it best when he said economic development is based in education, and school is the best place for children. That's why this convention places a priority on basic education, and we are trying to honor that priority.

Around the world, we are investing in creative solutions to get children out of abusive workrooms and into classrooms. We are giving them a way out of the soccer ball industry in Pakistan, the shoe industry in Brazil, the fireworks industry in Guatemala. We are giving them back the most precious gift of all, their childhood.

And as we work to provide both boys and girls access to schools, we are also working to provide their parents with viable economic alternatives and access to jobs. In Pakistan, for example, when 7,000 children moved out of the soccer ball manufacturing plant into the schools, 7,000 parents moved into jobs they didn't have before, at better incomes.

Microcredit loans help people in developing countries, and women in particular, to start businesses, raise their standard of living, build a better life for their children. I am proud that through the Agency for International Development, the United States financed 2 million such loans last year. So we have here not only the Secretary of Labor but the Secretary of Commerce. We see this not only as a labor issue but a business and an economic issue. We believe that everyone will be better off when children are given back their childhoods.

We are working to integrate the agenda, also, as all of you know, of the World Trade Organization, the IMF, and the World Bank

with the agenda of the ILO. That is key to making sure that the issues of child labor and core labor standards, more generally, are on the international economic agenda, and they don't become either/or conflicts. That's why ensuring the rights, the basic rights of labor, is central to our mission here in Seattle.

This is a good day for the children of the world, but we can make tomorrow even a better day. We can do it by seeing that other nations also ratify this treaty and join in our cause, and we can do it by building on the solid foundation of this convention and the common ground forged by leaders here in the work of the WTO, the IMF, the World Bank, and other international institutions. We have to harness the spirit of progress and the sense of possibility that this noble document embodies. We can light the way out of the darkness of abusive child labor into the dawn of a new century of promise for all the children of the world.

Thank you very much.

They've elected me to say this. I would like to ask Mr. Sweeney and Ambassador Niles and all of the Members of the Congress, the Governor and Secretary Daley, Secretary Slater, to come up and join us as we do this signing, please.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 a.m. at the Bell Harbor International Conference Center. In his remarks, he referred to Juan Samovia, director general, International Labor Organization; John J. Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO; former U.S. Ambassador to Greece Thomas M.T. Niles, president, U.S. Council for Business; Gov. Gary Locke of Washington; David Trimble, leader, and John Taylor, member, Ulster Unionist Party; Social Democratic and Labor Party members John Hume and Seamus Mallon; Gerry Adams, leader, and Martin McGuinness, member, Sinn Féin; Alliance Party leader Lord John Alderdice; Monica McWilliams of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition; Progressive Unionist Party spokesman David Ervine; Ulster Democratic Party leader Gary McMichael; Prime Minister Tony Blair and former Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern and former Prime Ministers John Bruton and Albert Reynolds of Ireland; Gen. John de Chastelain, Canadian Defense Forces, chair, Independent International Commission on Decommissioning; former United Kingdom Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Marjorie Mowlam and her successor, Peter Mandelson; and former Senator

George J. Mitchell, who chaired the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland. The convention was entitled the International Labor Organization Convention No. 182, Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor.

Telephone Interview With Mark Little of RTE and Steve Grimson of the BBC From Seattle

December 2, 1999

President's Possible Visit to Belfast

Mr. Grimson. First of all, Mr. President, thank you very much for joining us. There has been some speculation that with things again moving in the peace process, you may actually be considering making a return trip to Belfast—and we could say that it's safer than Seattle.

The President. [Laughter] Yes, Seattle, the new home of the Troubles.

Well, let me say this. First of all, I am elated about today's events. They are truly historic. Now the people in Northern Ireland have the authority and the power to work together and to shape their own future, and it's wonderful. And you know how much I love to come there, and I would come at the drop of a hat if there is some contribution I can make to the ongoing peace process and the work still to be done. I've told George Mitchell that. I've told Bertie Ahern that, and I've told Tony Blair that. And obviously, the parties know that. All the others know that I would do that. But I have not made a decision to come right now.

Decommissioning of Arms

Mr. Little. If I could ask you, it seems unfortunately, with every victory in the peace process, there are sometimes the seeds of the next crisis, and we have the Ulster Unionist Council coming back in February to consider progress on decommissioning. Are you concerned that the historic development we see today could be collapsed in February? And do you agree with the Republicans who say, this is Unionists setting a new deadline which is not in the Good Friday agreement?

The President. Well, I agree with George Mitchell's assessment that decommissioning is an essential element of the Good Friday

accord, and it has to be achieved in the overall implementation of the agreement. All parties have a collective responsibility here, and I think what we should do is to give the agreed-upon process the chance to work. I have great confidence in General de Chastelain. I believe the parties have great confidence in him. And I don't think you can underestimate the terrific importance of the IRA naming its representative to General de Chastelain's commission, and I hope they do that today. And the Loyalists should do the same.

And all of us on the outside, rather than speculating on this day about what might happen bad, I think we've got a roadmap for the future. We've got a process, and we've got a commission with a leader that the parties respect, and I think we ought to give it a chance to work.

Ulster Unionists Deadline

Mr. Grimson. The problem that we have had with last weekend's events, although today's events are genuinely historic, is that the Ulster Unionists under David Trimble do—have set effectively a deadline. And if by February there is no decommissioning, they will return and all the signs are that they could bring all of this work down.

The President. Well, let me say first of all, you know, I've always tried to help. I've done everything I could to help, and I've worked with David Trimble and his people and with Gerry Adams and the Sinn Féin and with John Hume and Seamus Mallon. And I think on this day the most important thing I should say is to ask people to focus on what they have all agreed on. And what they have all agreed on is to give the de Chastelain commission a chance to work and to participate in that. As long as that is out there, I think it would be a mistake for me, as a friend of the peace process and the people of Ireland and as the President, to do anything that could in any way complicate that. Let's give it a chance to work and find a way forward.

Impact of Cooperation

Mr. Little. Mr. President, you know that there are a significant proportion of Unionists who do not want to see Sinn Féin in government without some form of decommissioning by the IRA. Do you think the IRA have done enough to persuade that group of Unionists? Is it time they set a deadline for themselves for decommissioning, and is it time they said the war is actually over, the day of the bomb and the bullet is gone?

The President. Well, I believe if in fact the IRA names its representatives to the de Chastelain commission, I think that will be a pretty good signal that we're all moving in the right direction and that all parties recognize the truly historic nature of this day. And I think that a lot of people had to make a lot of compromises to get us to this day and to make the political changes necessary to reflect the plain will of the voters in both communities in Northern Ireland.

And let me say, I think you'll see more movement in the right direction—if none of us and none of them do anything that makes it any harder than it is already. So I'm quite hopeful, actually.

And let me say this—I can only tell you this from my experience in other parts of the world as well—I think that there will be an intrinsic benefit to all the parties being in the Government and working together and seeing each other and finding out how many things they actually agree on. I mean, there's really not a Republican or a Unionist way to figure out whether the economy is growing or there's adequate infrastructure. And they both have a common stake in having an excellent education for their children.

And I wouldn't minimize what I think will be the surprising amount of commonality they will find with one another as they assume the jobs they have. I mean, if you just look at the names of the portfolios the ministers have, and ask yourself, in how many of these areas could there legitimately be real differences? And won't the commonalities dwarf the differences? So I think the very process of being in this Government together, in the executive as well as the parliamentary branch, is very, very important. And I think it will have a terrifically positive

impact that will begin, I think, today, and go forward.

President's Analogy

Mr. Grimason. Mr. President, you recently and rather famously described the two sides here as like drunks in a bar who always have to have one more round. A lot of people—you got some criticism, but a lot of people here said you were actually right to draw that analogy. Are these people, in your view, ready to go on the Government wagon?

The President. Yes, I think they are. I did get a lot of criticism, and I probably deserved some of it, because I didn't mean to be making an ethnic slur. Though what I pointed out is, when people have deeply ingrained habits, you know, even if they're bad habits, they're hard to let go of, because you're sort of leaping out into the unknown, and it's a little frightening. And so maybe I should have used a different analogy, but I think that point, the general point, is quite valid.

And they're in the Government now, and they're in there together, which means—they're all saying, "Okay we let go a little." They let go of something to come together. And I think that is, to me, an enormously positive sign.

And so I think that, if the analogy was good at one time, it's less good today than it was, just because they've stood up a government together.

Legacy of Peace Initiatives

Mr. Little. Mr. President, you've been leader of the free world, some would say, in very turbulent times. And you have confronted issues of vital importance to America's national interest. When they write the history books, where does Northern Ireland figure in your legacy?

The President. Well, first of all, I think the credit goes primarily to the people and the leaders of Northern Ireland and to the leaders of Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland and, obviously, to George Mitchell for the role he played.

But I do think that the interest that the United States has had in this and the plain commitment we've had to it during my Presidency has made some difference. I hope it has. And all I can tell you is that to me, I

think it's very important. And I think it has enormous significance beyond the borders of the six counties and the Republic. I think the significance around the world is huge.

For example, I just met with the leaders of all the parties in Kosovo. I was in Kosovo, you know, and it's a place that the United States and Great Britain, frankly, took the lead in getting our NATO Allies together to stop a horrible example of ethnic and religious hatred and cleansing. And we had all these parties back together, and their wounds are much fresher and of a great magnitude.

And I could talk to them about the Irish peace process. And I could look them in the eye and say, "You know, you can do this, too. And sooner or later, you're going to have to do it. So you ought to do it."

We're entering a very critical phase of the Middle East peace process, where extremely difficult decisions have to be made, that are not the same as the kind of decisions that have to be made here. But it gives courage to the proponents of peace in a place like the Middle East to know that the Troubles could be laid down, and people could be reconciled and work together.

So you know, to me it's a big part of the legacy of all the peacemakers of the world in this decade who were involved in it, and I am very proud and honored that I had a chance to be a part of it.

Impact of Irish Peace Process

Mr. Grimason. Mr. President, could I ask you, the importance of the Northern Ireland peace process, could it be said that it will be the first really truly—if it works, the first really truly genuine conflict resolution in the sense that neither side will have won? Frequently, we have things ending with people winning or with a transference of power. Will it have that effect in a world sense?

The President. Yes, except I would use a different word. I think you can say that in many ways it is the first true conflict resolution. But instead of saying neither side won, I would say both sides won. And I think that if they didn't think they were winning, they would not have done this.

And I think when you look at the fact that the biggest problem in the world today are these conflicts over racial, ethnic, and reli-

gious differences sweeping the world, the fact that you have set a model here for reconciliation in what has often been a violent and always been a deeply historically embedded struggle, is a profound significance, because this element of people fearing and distrusting and then hating and dehumanizing those who are different from them is at the heart of the problem in the Middle East, the problems in the Balkans, the tribal wars in Africa. You just see it all over the world.

And so I think the people of Northern Ireland and their friends in the Irish Republic, who voted for the necessary changes to implement the Good Friday accord, and in Great Britain—they should know that what they have done is given enormous support and heart to people who are still struggling in very difficult circumstances everywhere in the world. It's just—I can't tell you how important I think it is.

You should have seen the look on the people's faces in Kosovo, the party leaders, who are still so fresh from their struggles, when I just was, in effect, hammering them with the decisions that the people and the leaders in Northern Ireland had made and the kind of accommodation that they had made to one another and how sooner or later people who shared the same piece of land had to work through—not necessarily identical decisions but the same sorts of decisions in the same sort of way. So it is a matter of truly historic proportions—not because nobody won, but because everybody won.

End of Ireland's Claim on Ulster

Mr. Little. Sir, today the Irish Republic did give up a very tangible expression of its identity, as it says, its right to have control over those six counties in Northern Ireland. Some Republicans will say they've given up a birthright today. What do you say to them?

The President. I would say to them, they gave up something quite significant, but they gave it up to the principle of democracy, of majority rule—the principle of consent, in the words that you have used there—and that in return they got not only peace but the chance for guaranteed representation, a guaranteed voice in their own affairs immediately, and a guaranteed role in shaping their children's future.

So I think the Irish Republic did a noble thing here. And they ennobled the people who agree with them and who still support the concept of a united Ireland, because they gave them the only chance they could ever have to achieve their dreams, and even more importantly, they gave them the only chance they could have to have a full life along the way.

The principle of consent and shared decisionmaking and guaranteed representation and now a renewed focus on the real challenges that real people face every day—I think it was a fine bargain, and a noble one.

Mr. Little. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. Grimson. Mr. President, thank you very much. We hope you are here soon.

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Little. Maybe for the turning on of the Christmas lights, we'll be there. [*Laughter*]

The President. You know, if it were up to me, I'd come once every two weeks. [*Laughter*]

Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 10:55 a.m. from the supervisor's office at the King's County International Airport at Boeing Field. In his remarks, the President referred to former Senator George J. Mitchell, who chaired the Multiparty talks in Northern Ireland; Prime Minister John Bruton of Ireland; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Gen. John de Chastelain, Canadian Defense Forces, chair, Independent International Commission on Decommissioning; Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble; Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams; John Hume and Seamus Mallon, members, Social Democratic and Labor Party. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks at a Dinner Honoring Mayor Edward Rendell in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

December 2, 1999

Thank you so much. Thank you, David, Bill, Mr. Mayor, ladies and gentlemen. It's a great honor for me to be here tonight. You know, I'm preparing for what it will be like a year from now when I am just a member of the Senate spouses club—[*laughter*]—when I have to know my place more. And

I thought that there could be no better preparation than to come be the warm-up act for Ed Rendell tonight. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, in all seriousness, I am profoundly honored to be here. I'll never forget the first time I met Mayor Rendell here in Philadelphia in 1992 when I was running for President. And we were walking down the streets of a neighborhood where he had an anti-crime program going. And we shot a few baskets. We made very few, but we shot more. [*Laughter*]

And I thought that this—I have met a kindred spirit, because not only did we agree on so many of the same philosophies on crime, on welfare, on the economy, but we agreed on how public life should be conducted. I have thought about it so many times since, but I got into the political race for President in 1991 at a time when not just Philadelphia but the whole country was facing economic distress and social division, political drift, and then kind of the whole discrediting of the enterprise of government.

And I was really frustrated, as the Governor of what my distinguished predecessor used to refer to as a—of a small Southern State, when I would see all these people in Washington just sort of throwing brickbats at each other and, you know, struggling to get their 15 seconds on the evening news, which they know they could always get if they repeated the same thing over and over again and made sure there was a real wedge dividing the American people in all kinds of ways.

And it struck me that if we ran our business life or our family lives or our personal lives the way we were running our national political lives, the country would just run off the tracks entirely. And I was determined to try to go to the American people with a unifying theory of how we ought to do our common work, to create opportunity for everybody responsible enough to work for it, to build a community of all Americans amidst all the differences among us, and mostly, to get to work on our common challenges. And I went to Philadelphia.

I had no idea how I'd do here or whether I would be embraced here, but I liked it, and I liked Ed Rendell, and I knew that he was committed to turning this city around and to moving it forward. And we're walking

down the street having a discussion, not so much about politics but about what it would really take to get the crime rate down, what it would really take to give people on welfare the dignity of work without forcing them to sacrifice their responsibilities as parents, what it would take to bring genuine economic growth back into urban America.

Ed always says, well, you know, he couldn't have done it without you and then he says he couldn't have done it without me, and he talks about the Vice President and I putting the empowerment zone here and the 1,000 police and all that. That's all true. But the success that we have enjoyed here in this country would not have happened had it not been for leaders like Ed Rendell. And there is nobody in America—nobody—who does it better.

Along the way, we've become very good personal friends. He's always been there to try to help raise financial support for me and the Vice President, for our party. At a time when he might have been taking at least a breath, he agreed to our request to become chairman of the national Democratic Party. He has always been there. And I've thought about it. Near as I can figure, all I've done in return is make his wife a Federal judge, so she can't even campaign for him anymore. [Laughter] So I have disabled him as he has empowered me. It doesn't really seem fair.

I would just like to say one other thing. You know, in this wonderful life that you have made it possible for me to enjoy—and no city in America has been any better to me than Philadelphia, and the State of Pennsylvania has been very good to me and the Vice President and to Hillary and to Tipper. I have had the enormous privilege to get up and to work every day and try to make something good happen in America. But I have never been under any illusion that I could do anything other than create the conditions and provide the tools for the American people who really make this country go every day.

Today in this country, the most innovative, the most effective public servants are the best mayors, because they understand our common humanity and our limitless possibility and because people like you hire them

to get things done. And I just hope that we can continue to do that sort of thing in Washington. People ask me all the time—they say, "Well, you know, it's amazing how well the country is doing, and you must be a great politician." I said, "Well, a lot of it was we just showed up for work every day."

There's a lot to be said for just showing up for work every day and keeping your eye on the prize and remembering who the customers are and believing in the potential of this country. Philadelphia is at the heart of everything that's important about America, our history, our founding documents, our spirit. And it is altogether appropriate that in this remarkable time for our country, no city was better led, made more progress, or proved to be a better partner than the city of Philadelphia.

So I have a lot to be grateful to Ed Rendell for. Most important of all, from your point of view, is he proved that the ideas we shared would work with hard work and good will. And the results are here for all to see, embodied in this beautiful film. He helped to sustain our common political efforts, but most important to me, in the good times and the dark times, he was always there as a real friend. And when all is said and done, that counts most of all.

Thank you, and God bless you.

Don't sit down. This is going to be brief. But you see, you can tell which one of us is not really term limited. He tried to charge up here to the microphone and was going to deprive me of my one little role here of introducing him. But I still have a little capacity to pull rank. [Laughter] So this is my job.

Ladies and gentlemen, the person we all came here to honor tonight, Mayor Ed Rendell.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:42 p.m. at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to David Cohen, former chief of staff to Mayor Rendell, and H. William DeWeese, minority leader, Pennsylvania State House.

Remarks on Economic Growth*December 3, 1999*

Thank you very much. Thank you, Secretary Herman and Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Martin Baily, and especially, thank you, Marvin Dawkins, for your remarks and for the power of your example.

This is a very different time than we were experiencing 7 years ago this month. When I ran for President in 1992, it was a time of economic distress and uncertainty for our country. While some people were moving from the industrial to the information economy with optimism and purpose, many others felt fear and uncertainty because of the problems in our economy, high unemployment, big deficits, high interest rates, low productivity gains, falling real wages for average Americans.

Too many Americans couldn't tell the story that Marvin just told. They lacked the skills they needed to succeed in the new economy; they felt threatened by the changes; and they had no access to the tools that would lift them up.

But when I traveled around the country in 1992 with the Vice President, we saw a lot of signs of hope. We saw a lot of people who were winning. And we became even more convinced that our country, as a whole, could do very well in this new global information economy, if we could create the conditions and provide all Americans the tools necessary to succeed.

It seemed to me that there were three absolutely pivotal elements. First, fiscal discipline: We had to get rid of the deficit and get interest rates back down and get investment back up. Second, expanded trade: We had 4 percent of the world's people and 22 percent of the world's income; even someone technologically challenged like me could figure out we had to sell something to the other 96 percent of the people on the globe. And third, greater investments in new technologies and in our people in their capacity not only to know what they needed to know but to learn for a lifetime. And people like Marvin Dawkins are Exhibit A of the pivotal importance of that.

Now in 1993, we put in place a new economic strategy. It cut the deficit and in-

creased investment by eliminating hundreds of inessential programs and putting us on a path that now has given us the smallest Federal Government in 37 years. In 1997, with the Balanced Budget Act, we continued the strategy, again increasing investment, cutting inessential programs, first balancing the budget and then providing the first back-to-back budget surpluses in 42 years.

Now that led to lower interest rates, which helped ordinary Americans in all kinds of ways. It cut the price of the average home mortgage by \$2,000, the price of the average car payments by \$200 a year, the average college loan payment by \$200 a year. But critically, it also cut the borrowing costs and the investment costs, therefore, for new businesses, especially for investment in new productivity-enhancing technologies.

At the same time, we negotiated over 270 trade agreements, including dozens of them involving high technology issues, all of which helped Americans to increase exports of high technology products—services. We promoted more competition in telecommunications, providing American consumers with the lowest Internet access rates in the world and fueling the growth of E-commerce. And we've taken actions that have led to the creation of a whole new generation of digital wireless phones, you know, the kind you hear go off in restaurants, movie theaters, and Presidential press conferences. *[Laughter]*

While eliminating hundreds of programs, we have almost doubled our investment in education and training, everything from preschool to dramatically increasing college access, to establishing lifetime access to training and retraining programs for people like Marvin.

Now, as a result of these actions and, most importantly, the innovation and the hard work of the American people, we are now experiencing an amazing virtuous cycle of progress and prosperity that few could have imagined. We are in the midst of the longest peacetime economic expansion in American history. If as seems highly likely it goes on through February, it will become the longest economic expansion in our history.

It has given us low inflation, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, also the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest poverty rates in 20 years, the highest homeownership ever recorded, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded, the lowest African-American poverty rate ever recorded, the lowest Hispanic poverty rate recorded in a generation, the lowest poverty rate among households headed by single adults in over 40 years, and the lowest unemployment rate among women in 40 years.

In other words, a good economy has also turned out to be very good social policy. More and more Americans are mastering the skills and reaping the benefits of this new economy, and America itself continues to lead in new technologies, from E-commerce to biotech, that are shaping the future of the entire world.

Now today, I want to talk about one more piece of stunningly good economic news that is the direct result of the actions that have been taken and the work that has been done by our people to propel our economy into the new century, and now, we have a high-tech animation behind me—[laughter]—to illustrate this good economic news. I hate to compete with the movies, and I'll probably lose—[laughter]—but the idea is that I'm supposed to be the narrator of this show. [Laughter]

What you see behind me is a graphic representation of the growth of new jobs in America, beginning in 1993, as well as the geographic location of these jobs. You can see they have been spread across the country, wherever people live. Virtually no area of our Nation has been left out. At the bottom, you can also see a running tally of how many new jobs have been created. [Laughter] And I'm ahead of the running tally. [Laughter] But the latest figures are being released today.

Come along. [Laughter] What did you say? Filler, filler. [Laughter] I've never been at a loss for words. [Laughter] Why can't I do this?

With today's new numbers, we have truly crossed a remarkable threshold: 20 million jobs. In fact, the specific number behind me is 20,043,000 jobs, thanks to the hard work

of the American people, the economic policies we have pursued.

To give you some idea of what this means, 20 million jobs is a number greater than the population of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Denver, Washington, San Francisco, Dallas, Miami, Buffalo, Cleveland, and Little Rock combined. [Laughter] Twenty million people would fill the Rose Bowl to capacity 200 times over. Twenty million jobs are a lot of jobs.

And by and large, those jobs are good, well-paying jobs, jobs on which you can support a family, buy a home, afford a vacation, save for college, put away a nest egg for retirement. This was made clear in a new report being released today by my Council of Economic Advisers and the Department of Labor.

The report finally should put to rest the old myths about the new economy. The 20 million new jobs we have created mostly are high-wage not low-wage jobs. Over 80 percent of them are in job categories that pay above the median wage. They are mostly full-time, not part-time. In fact, the proportion of Americans in part-time work has actually fallen a bit in the last few years.

Finally, those 20 million new jobs have benefited not just one race or class of Americans but all Americans. Unlike the end of the last economic expansion in the 1980's, when average wages went down, wages during the last 4 years of this expansion have gone up across the board in all income categories, with some of the biggest gains coming to some of our hardest pressed working families. As I said—I want to say this again, because I think it is worth reiterating; this economy is not just 20 million new jobs and a stock market that went above 11000 again today—I never talk about it because it goes down as well as up, but it's done pretty well. But let me say again, the lowest African-American unemployment and poverty rates ever recorded—and we've been separating the figures for nearly 30 years now—the lowest Hispanic unemployment rate on record and the lowest Hispanic poverty rate in over 25 years, the highest minority homeownership on record, the lowest female unemployment rate since 1953. And I don't need to

remind the large group of women in this audience that in 1953, there were a lot smaller percentage of women in the work force, so this is actually a much more important figure than even that number indicates.

Now, technology has been a very important part of this economic performance. It has given us big productivity gains. The information technology sector alone has been responsible for about a third of our economic growth. And jobs in that sector pay nearly 80 percent more than the private sector average. If we want our current prosperity to continue into the 21st century, we must therefore clearly continue to encourage the creation and the spread of new technologies in our own economy.

Therefore, I would like to highlight a couple of things that I think are of real importance in the budget agreement achieved with Congress, that I signed just a few days ago. First, the budget I signed contains substantial increases in direct Federal investment and long-term research and development. This is still very important, as all the private sector experts tell us. It is the kind of investment that allowed the Defense Department to create the predecessor of today's Internet 30 years ago, that led Marc Andresen, working at a federally funded supercomputer center, to develop the first graphical web browser.

We worked hard to get increases not only for biomedical research that had strong support in our Congress but for other science and engineering disciplines as well. And I would like to make this point very strongly, because it's one that I hope to make more progress on next year and hope to see our country embrace as a policy across the board, without regard to party: It is very important that we have a balanced research portfolio. And I don't believe that the National Institutes of Health has had a stronger supporter than me. I believe that. But we have to have a balanced research portfolio, because the research enterprise is increasingly interdependent. Advances in health care, for example, are often dependent on breakthroughs in other disciplines, such as the physics needed for medical imaging technology or the computer science needed to develop more drugs more rapidly or to continue the mapping of the human genome.

Just think what these investments could mean. Today, scientists and engineers all over the country have ideas for new technologies they need Federal help to explore, technologies that could transform our economy and our lives in the future just as dramatically as the Internet is doing today. There is really a continuing revolution, as we all know, in all kinds of computer technology, in biomedical research, and also in materials development, which I'll say a little more about.

We'll have new materials as strong as steel but 10 times lighter. At the Detroit auto show this year, they were already showing cars 500 to 1,000 pounds lighter that have exactly the same safety tests as the old cars with steel. Obviously, that dramatically increases mileage, that reduces greenhouse gas emissions. We could have new drugs that might cure spinal cord injuries or new computer chips that might simulate nerve movements that allow people to function without the nerves actually being reconnected.

Just before I walked out here—this is ironic—just before we walked out here, we had CNN on in the little anteroom, and they pointed out that Stevie Wonder was about to have experimental surgery to have a computer chip inserted in his retina to see if it can simulate and recreate the functioning that was lost when he was an infant. We obviously all hope it will work. But I can tell you this: Someday, such things will work, and it won't be very long in the future.

We already have fuel cells and blended fuel engines for automobiles which will take mileage up to 70 and 80 miles a gallon. We will soon have, I believe, ultra-clean fuel cells for cars, whose only byproduct will be water clean enough to drink; computers that can translate English into foreign languages and vice-versa as fast as people can speak. All these things are right around the corner, but we have to continue our commitment to research.

Second, later this month, I will sign a tax measure that extends for 5 years the life of the vitally important research and experimentation tax credit. This is important because this tax credit gives private firms the incentives they need to invest in innovative technologies that often don't show up quickly

on the bottom line but that, over the long run, will be highly profitable and that immediately provide tremendous benefits to society as a whole.

Third, last week I signed legislation to help accelerate competition in the telecommunication industry, to give consumers more choices and lower prices. I also signed a bill to strengthen and streamline our patent and intellectual property system, to strengthen the incentives for the next Alexander Graham Bell or Steve Jobs, to create the inventions and innovations that will drive the 21st century economy.

No one today can say for sure what our economy will look like in 25 or 50 years or what as yet unimagined technologies will transform our lives. But we do know that it will be truly amazing, and it will happen with breathtaking speed and scope. And we know that our Nation has always prospered when Government has invested in giving people the opportunity to make the most of their vision and their dreams, from financing the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition to the Interstate Highway System and the space program.

The American people have always been a bold and innovative bunch. We are always drawn to uncharted lands over the next horizon. Who will pack our bags and head out to the latest gold rush or tinker in our basements for years to invent a product no one else has ever imagined? That's what we do.

Today, thanks to wise investments made by Government and the private sector over many years, the American people have before them the unexplored continent of cyberspace and the prospect of discovering what is in the black holes in outer space. By continuing these commitments, we can celebrate more days like today.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:25 p.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Marvin Dawkins, former AT&T employee who took advantage of retraining opportunities to begin a new career, who introduced the President; Marc Andresen, cofounder Netscape Communications Corp.; and musician Stevie Wonder.

Statement on United States Military Training on Vieques Island

December 3, 1999

For several weeks, we have been working on how best to reconcile the imperative of providing satisfactory training for our Armed Forces, with the strong feelings of many residents of Vieques and Puerto Rico about the impact of training operations there. I have discussed this with the Governor of Puerto Rico, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and others.

Today the Secretary of Defense has recommended a plan of action which I believe offers the best avenue to addressing both needs. I have accepted that recommendation and am directing the Secretary of Defense to work with the people of Vieques and Puerto Rico so that we can move forward in a cooperative manner.

I understand the longstanding concerns of residents of the island. These concerns cover a wide range of issues, from health and safety to the economy and the environment. They reflect a distrust that, unfortunately, has been building for decades. Those concerns must be addressed, and I believe our plan will do so in a constructive manner.

At the same time, as Commander in Chief, I cannot send our service men and women into harm's way if they have not been adequately trained. The training that our Atlantic Fleet has undertaken on Vieques since 1941 is important. While the Navy and the Marine Corps will develop a satisfactory alternative for the upcoming exercise, it will take several years to develop a comparable long-term replacement.

The plan I am adopting today provides for the end of training on Vieques within 5 years, unless the people of Vieques choose to continue the relationship; restricts training activities during the transition period to those required by the Services; sets forth an ambitious economic development plan for Vieques that would be implemented during this transition; and gives the people of Puerto Rico and the Navy an opportunity to discuss this plan in order for it to be understood fully

before training resumes this spring for this transitional period.

In particular, the following steps will be undertaken:

First, the Navy and the Marine Corps will make alternative arrangements which they deem satisfactory for training of the Eisenhower Battle Group and the WASP Amphibious Ready Group, scheduled for December. While such arrangements can be undertaken for the Eisenhower and WASP groups, they do not constitute a long-term alternative to Vieques. Rather, this period will provide an opportunity for the people of Vieques to discuss this plan with the Navy and the Marine Corps and understand it fully.

Second, we will resume training next spring for a transition period, no longer than 5 years. This will enable the Navy to develop a suitable, long-term alternative. Training on Vieques will cease after this transition period unless the people of Vieques decide it should be continued. The Navy and the Marine Corps will develop a timetable to phase out operations in Vieques as soon as possible during the transition period, including transferring title of land to Puerto Rico beginning with the western quarter of the island.

Third, when training resumes for this transition period, it will be limited to inert ordnance only—no live fire—unless and until the people of Vieques decide differently. Training will be authorized for 90 days a year, what we need to meet our essential training needs.

Finally, when training resumes, we will implement an ambitious program that addresses the concerns that the community has had for so long—and that has been spelled out by the Secretary of Defense.

I am convinced that this plan meets my essential responsibility as Commander in Chief to assure that our military forces are satisfactorily trained and ready, while at the same time addressing the legitimate concerns of the people of Vieques. It provides some breathing space so that the people on the island and the Navy and Marine Corps can proceed in an orderly and mutually respectful fashion.

Statement on Signing the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000

December 3, 1999

Today I have signed into law H.R. 1555, the "Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000." The Act authorizes appropriations for U.S. intelligence and intelligence-related activities during fiscal year 2000. This legislation contains numerous provisions that will help to ensure that the U.S. Intelligence Community retains the capability to counter threats to our Nation's security.

This Act contains a provision, known as the "Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act," that establishes a global program targeting the activities of significant foreign narcotics traffickers and their organizations. The new Act provides a statutory framework for the President to institute sanctions against foreign drug kingpins when such sanctions are appropriate, with the objective of denying their businesses and agents access to the U.S. financial system and to the benefits of trade and transactions involving U.S. businesses and individuals. Working with other nations, I intend to use the tools in this provision to combat the national security threat posed to the United States by international drug trafficking.

No nation alone can effectively counter these supra-national criminal organizations. The United States must continue to cooperate with, assist, and encourage other nations to join in coordinated efforts against these organizations. Consequently, as kingpin designations are made under this law, we look forward to working with appropriate host government authorities to pursue additional measures against those designated.

I am concerned about several parts of the legislation as well as segments of the accompanying joint explanatory statement. Although not law, classified language in the statement accompanying the bill, entitled "State Department Restrictions on Intelligence Collection Activities," could, if required to be implemented, interfere with my responsibilities under the Constitution to conduct foreign policy and as Commander in Chief. My Administration is committed to

protecting and increasing its foreign intelligence collection capabilities while simultaneously promoting our foreign policy goals. To that end, in July of this year the Department of State issued new, uniform guidance that clarified the contact procedures and guidelines for executive branch personnel (including military attaches) with respect to official representatives of nations of concern. I believe that these guidelines strike an appropriate balance among the competing interests at stake. Accordingly, consistent with my constitutional responsibilities with respect to the conduct of foreign policy and as Commander in Chief, I will continue to expect that foreign policy guidance provided to U.S. defense attaches will be treated as a foreign policy matter, and direct that the July guidance remain in effect until such time as I decide otherwise.

The Act also creates a commission to review the roles, mission, and operations of the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), and I am pleased to note that the Director of Central Intelligence will have a representative on the commission. While I support the establishment of this commission, I believe that because the NRO is an element within the Department of Defense, the Department should be represented on the commission. I also recommend that the commission coordinate its review and findings of mutual interest with the Commission to Assess U.S. National Security Space Management and Organization established by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106-65). Further, H.R. 1555 provides that “[n]o department or agency of the Government may withhold information from the [National Commission for the Review of the National Reconnaissance Office] on the grounds that providing the information to the Commission would constitute the unauthorized disclosure of classified information or information relating to intelligence sources or methods.” I do not read this provision to detract from my constitutional authority, including my authority over national security information.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
December 3, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 1555, approved December 3, was assigned Public Law No. 106-120.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

November 28

The President and Hillary Clinton returned to the White House from Camp David, MD.

November 29

In an early evening ceremony in the Oval Office, the President received diplomatic credentials from Ambassadors Lebohang K. Moleko of Lesotho, Mario Artaza of Chile, Roland Eng of Cambodia, Simbi Veke Mubako of Zimbabwe, Roberto Bernardo Saladin Selin of the Dominican Republic, Guillermo Alfredo Ford Boyd of Panama, Mohamed Nabil Fahmy of Egypt, Shunji Yanai of Japan, and Jibril Muhammed Aminu of Nigeria.

The President announced the recess appointment of Leonard R. Page as General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board.

November 30

In the morning, the President traveled to San Francisco, CA.

In the evening, the President traveled to Beverly Hills, CA, and later, he traveled to Seattle, WA, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to appoint John T. Pawlikowski and Jerome J. Shestack to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

December 1

In the morning, the President toured the Control Tower and Terminal Five Transit Shed at the Port of Seattle.

In the afternoon, the President briefly spoke to representatives of the agricultural community.

Later, the President met separately with International Leaders, NGO Environmental Leaders, and NGO Labor Leaders in the Governor's Suite at the Westin Hotel.

December 2

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA, where he attended a reception at the Pennsylvania Convention Center.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

December 3

In the afternoon, the President participated in a menorah lighting ceremony in the Oval Office.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released November 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: Meeting With His Excellency Ernesto Zedillo, President of Mexico

Announcement: Attendees at the Signing of H.R. 3194, "Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2000"

Released December 1

Transcript of a press briefing by U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on the Seattle Round

Released December 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Labor Secretary Alexis Herman and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on the International Labor Organization convention

Statement by U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky and Council on Environmental Quality Chairman George Frampton: On Trade Liberalization and Forest Protection

Released December 3

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Labor Secretary Alexis Herman and Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Martin Bailey on economic growth

Acts Approved by the President

Approved November 29

H.R. 100 / Public Law 106–111

To establish designations for United States Postal Service buildings in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

H.R. 197 / Public Law 106–112

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service at 410 North 6th Street in Garden City, Kansas, as the "Clifford R. Hope Post Office"

H.R. 3194 / Public Law 106–113

Making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes

S. 278 / Public Law 106–114

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain lands to the county of Rio Arriba, New Mexico

S. 382 / Public Law 106–115

Minuteman Missile National Historic Site Establishment Act of 1999

S. 1398 / Public Law 106–116
To clarify certain boundaries on maps relating to the Coastal Barrier Resources System

Approved November 30

H.R. 2116 / Public Law 106–117
Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act

H.R. 2280 / Public Law 106–118
Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 1999

Approved December 3

H.R. 20 / Public Law 106–119
Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Mongaup Visitor Center Act of 1999

H.R. 1555 / Public Law 106–120
Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000